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PERTTI LUNTINEN

THE IMPERIAL RUSSIAN ARMY AND
NAVY IN FINLAND 1808–1918

Suomen Historiallinen Seura
Finnish Historical Society
Societas Historica Finlandiae

Pertti Luntinen

The Imperial Russian
Army and Navy in
Finland 1808–1918

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order in Helsinki 1902. Photo: Museovirasto.
- Russian warships in the Helsinki naval base
in the winter of 1916–17. Photo: Sotamuseo.

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Introduction

Imperial Russian armed forces were garrisoned in eastern Finland from 1710 onwards, and in the rest of the country from 1808 to 1918. In the following story, I shall show how the Tsar's soldiers and sailors guaranteed the sovereignty of the Russian Empire in this north-western borderland, which was vitally important especially for the security of St Petersburg, the Imperial capital. The supposed intentions of Russia's potential enemies, first Britain, then Germany (to be aided by Sweden, it was felt) influenced the plans and actions of the Imperial generals in the country. So did the supposed loyalty or otherwise of the local population, which, under the protection of the Emperor and his military and naval forces, developed from being a population of the previous *Hinterland* of Sweden into an autonomous nation. This development was first favoured by the Imperial government, but by the end of the nineteenth century it started to trouble the Russian officers and officials, and the so-called Finnish question, *finliandskii vopros*, was added to the many problems which, in the end, proved insoluble for the Tsarist regime.

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I am going to give a rather detailed description of the Russian military and naval forces in the country, of their plans and eventual activities there, and the result will be a comprehensive military-political history of the Russian period in Finland. The experience, with its light and dark moments, left a lasting historical memory which was afterwards not without importance in the relations of independent Finland with Soviet Russia and the Soviet Union.¹

I have based my study first on the documents which the Russians left behind in Finland when they fled the country in 1917–18, then

1 Unhappily, no good history of Finland exists in English. Klinge, *Finlands historia 3, Kejsartiden* is the newest work. An introduction to the political history: Jussila, Nevakivi and Hentilä, *Suomen poliittinen historia*. A detailed history of Finnish central administration: *Suomen keskushallinnon historia 1809–1996*. *Suomen itsenäistymisen vuodet 1917–1920*, vols. I–III, is the most recent introduction to the critical years of Finland's divorce from Russia.

on the documents microfilmed for the National Archives of Finland in the Soviet era, and, finally, on the archives of military history in Moscow and of naval history in St Petersburg, during the *glasnost*' and post-Soviet period.² I would like to thank these archives, as well as the Public Record Office at Kew, the Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Freiburg i.Br., and the French Military and Naval archives at Vincennes for their friendly and competent help.

Professor David Kirby has written an admirable introduction to the history of the Baltic world;³ Edward Thaden's work on Russification⁴ can also be recommended. There are innumerable books on Russian military history in general, written in Russia as well as in the West. For the general background, I rely on those books, listed in "Works consulted". The list cannot pretend to be an exhaustive bibliography, but only an acknowledgement of my indebtedness to other historians and authors.

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I have previously written a study on Russian war plans as reported by French military attachés in St Petersburg.⁵ On the theme of the Russian military presence in Finland, Olavi Seitkari and Tuomo Polvinen have written the most important works. I am impatiently looking forward to the completion of Pertti Alanen's study on the Russian military organization during the first half of the nineteenth century. Dr J. E. O. Screen has written several studies on various aspects of military life in Finland, and his *The Finnish Army, 1881–1901*⁶ is a complete handbook of every aspect of the national Finnish rifle troops. The final phase, the revolution and civil war in 1917–18, has been competently dealt with by Ohto Manninen and Sampo Ahto. Other colleagues, too, when cited, will find their studies mentioned

2 I made my first notes in 1990 and 1992, when the Russian military archives were still called Tsentralnyi Gosudarstvennyi Voenno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv SSSR, in short TsGVIA, but in 1996 they were called Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Voenno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv, RGVIA, and the naval archives in St.Petersburg are the Rossiiskii Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Voenno-Morskogo Flota, RGAVMF.

3 Kirby, *The Baltic World, 1772–1993*; *Europe's Northern Periphery in an Age of Change*.

4 Thaden, "The Russian Government." *Russification in the Baltic Provinces and Finland, 1855–1914*, ed. by Edward C. Thaden.

5 Luntinen, *French Information on Russian War Plans*. In Moscow, in the 1980s, I was told – by bureaucrats, not by archivists – that no documents on the defence of the Baltic coast existed, so I went to Vincennes instead to see what the military attachés had reported. It seems that in the 1990s the documents have been found to exist in Russia, after all.

6 Screen, *The Finnish Army, 1881–1901: Training the Rifle Battalions*.

in footnotes. In the histories of the nineteenth-century Finland, military questions have been mentioned, understandably enough without any lengthy discussion, with the main interest centred on ethnic Finnish troops, politically important and nationally interesting for the Finns, but numerically minimal and thus of less military interest. A general overview of the military in Finland in this period has been sketched by Jarl Gallén in 1961, but I believe that a fuller and more modern study, based on all available archive material, is called for.

The U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey during and after World War II "was to ascertain facts and to seek truth, eliminating completely any preconceived theories or dogmas".⁷ To me, this seems a worthy even if unattainable ideal.

I am grateful to friends, colleagues, departments, archives, libraries and foundations who have made my work possible and pleasant. I would especially like to thank Dr. George Maude for his valuable advice and comments, not only for this work but over the more than twenty years of my endeavours in the field of historical research. I very much appreciate the advice and criticism by Professor Kirby and Doctor Screen on my text. The list of works consulted (p. 316 et seq.) cannot pretend to be an exhaustive bibliography, but only an acknowledgement of my indebtedness to other historians and authors. I am grateful to the Finnish Historical Society for taking my work in their series of publications; their Editor Rauno Endén has been most helpful. Thanks are also due to Pirkko Numminen who has drawn the maps and to Maija Räisänen for the layout.

I have divided the story of the Russian armed forces in Finland into major chapters; first, when the Finns accepted their previous hereditary enemy as their own monarch; second, when this dynastic loyalty was tested by war and rewarded with reforms; then, when the dynastic loyalty was disturbed by the development of nationalist ideas in the Empire as well as in the Grand Duchy of Finland, so that even military problems were tainted with nationalist thinking; fourth, when there followed an open conflict; and finally, when the break-down of the Russian Empire occurred, with the intervention of foreign Empires, a phase which for Finland brought with it independence.

7 Thomas A. Keaney and Eliot A. Cohen, *Revolution in Warfare. Air power in the Persian Gulf*. Airlife Publishing, Shrewsbury 1995, p. xii.

Russian names and words I have transliterated according to the Library of Congress system recommended by the *Slavonic and East European Review*.⁸ In Finland, many localities have both Swedish and Finnish names, reflecting the centuries-old history of the country as part of the Swedish Empire 1155–1809, and the existence of a bilingual population. I have preferred Finnish place-names, giving Swedish and sometimes Russian names in brackets when necessary, and all three forms in the Index. Dates are given in the Old or the New Style, depending on whether the source in question is Russian or Western; the Old Style was eleven days late in the eighteenth century, twelve days in the nineteenth and thirteen days in the twentieth. Thus the Bolshevik revolution of 25 October 1917 in the old reckoning took place on 7 November 1917 according to our calendar.

8 The system of transliteration is not applicable on Russian names which have always been written in their traditional form, e.g. Menschikoff, not Menshikov, or Seyn, not Zein, or when the transliteration would result in a wrong form of the original name in Latin scripture, e.g. von Plehwe, not Pleve. In my defence I should like to resort to the example of the great historian John Julius Norwich, *Byzantium; the Decline and Fall*. Penguin Books, London 1996, p. xxxvii: "Consistency has always seemed to me a greatly overrated virtue, and I have made little or no effort to preserve it where the spelling of proper names is concerned".

The Conquest

FROM THE SWEDISH TO THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

Before the Russian conquest

Dominion over the area from the Gulfs of Finland and Bothnia to Lake Onega, an area very sparsely inhabited by Finnish-speaking tribes or clans, was contested by neighbouring states as soon as they were formed in the Middle Ages. In Sweden and Russia, tribal thugs, after killing each other, were slowly emerging as kings and princes from the ninth century onwards. The Novgorodian tribute-gathering raids seem to have reached rather far to the West, while the south-western part of the Finnish area was confirmed as a constituent part of the young kingdom of Sweden and included in the Roman Catholic sphere in the twelfth century. The interior of the country was subdued by the Swedes in the thirteenth century. Their attempt to cross the River Neva was defeated by Prince Alexander Nevski of Novgorod in 1240, who thus saved Ingria and Eastern Karelia for Orthodox and Russian influence. After many campaigns a line of demarcation was drawn in the Peace of Pähkinäsaari (Nöteborg)¹ in 1323. Western Karelia, with the fort and town of Viipuri (Viborg, Vyborg), thereafter belonged to Sweden, while eastern Karelia, with its fishing and hunting grounds reaching to the northern edge of the Gulf of Bothnia, remained in the Novgorod sphere. The ephemeral border was soon crossed by settlers from the West, and peace was broken by innumerable local raids and even by wars of a more organized and serious nature.

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1 Most of the toponyms in Finland are known in their Swedish form in Russian sources and consequently in Russian and other books; Finns, naturally, use the original Finnish names.

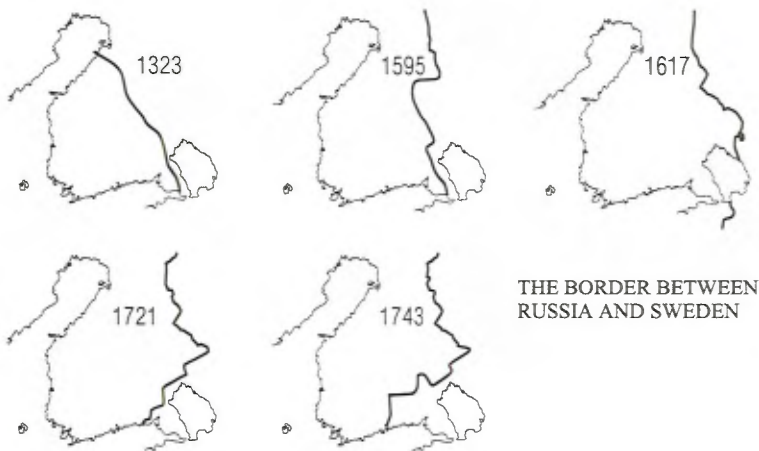
Finland as such was of no special interest for the contestants, except for her fur resources. The interest shown in Finland by Swedes, Russians, and also by Hansa traders was due to its strategic position between the contestants on the flank of the main trade route between the West and Russia.

It has sometimes been said, in Finland, that the Pähkinäsaari border was unnatural because it divided the Finnish nation, which God had ordained to be one,² but in fact the Finnish population had never been united. Eastern Finns or Karelians, who adopted Orthodox Christianity, called their Western kinsmen Swedes, while the Karelians were often called Russians by the Catholic, later Lutheran Finns. Both halves of the language group took part in the wars of their overlords and even made raids of their own against each other. The Western tribes were destined to become the Finnish nation in the nineteenth century. On the western and southern coastal regions of the country lived Swedish-speaking settlers from the West, and many Finns also adopted the Swedish language, especially officials of the Crown and tradespeople who often visited Stockholm. The country where they lived, the *Östland* or Eastern land of the Swedish kingdom, was already called Finland in the Middle Ages, but the name did not indicate any political or ethnic entity; it only had a geographical and perhaps feudal or heraldic importance.

After the conquest of Novgorod by Ivan III in 1478, the Swedish-Russian quarrel was kept up by the Grand Prince of Moscow. The main armies were accompanied by guerillas of both sides, who garrotted men, slit women open, and impaled children. But the grand Muscovite offensive was fended off by the defenders of Viipuri in 1495 and the Russians had to be satisfied with laying waste the surrounding countryside before retreating. The resources of medieval Muscovy did not allow for a sustained warfare, only for annual raids.

Sweden rapidly organized centralized government in the sixteenth century, at a time when internal disorganization weakened Germany, Poland, and – worst of all – Muscovy. The Swedes succeeded in winning a foothold in the Baltic provinces, starting from 1561. In the long war of 1570–95, Moscow, which was simultaneously threatened by a victorious Poland, had to give up her pretensions to the Gulf of

2 *Sotilaspojan käsikirja 1942* (Handbook for Boy Soldiers). This is one of the more extreme examples, being an aspect of war-time propaganda for Greater Finland, but the idea did endure from the nineteenth century to 1944.



The border between Russia and Sweden

For centuries Sweden and Russia fought each other for domination over the region to the east of the Baltic Sea, inhabited by Finnish-speaking peoples. In the 14th–17th centuries Sweden pushed the Russians back. (Peace Treaties of Pähkinäsaari 1323, Täysinä 1595, Stolbova 1617). The eastern part of the Kingdom of Sweden got the name of Finland, parts of which the revived Russia annexed in the 18th century. (Peace Treaties of Uusikaupunki 1721, Turku 1743).

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Bothnia and retreat to the watershed in the interior of Finland. The Swedes, arguing from a falsified copy of the 1323 treaty, even demanded that the border run to the Arctic Sea. The Russians had to concede in principle, but in practice the border in the north remained unmarked until the nineteenth century.

The Time of Troubles in Russia made possible a further Swedish push towards Moscow in 1609 and the occupation of Novgorod in 1611. When peace was signed in 1617 at Stolbova, Russia had to retreat beyond Lake Ladoga and thus lost part of Karelia, all of Ingria, Estonia and Livonia, and, worst of all, access to the Baltic Sea. Russia was spared further losses in the region of Lake Onega and the White Sea when Sweden turned its warlike attention to Central Europe, behaving like a Great Power for a century.

The core of the Swedish army was national, recruited on the ancient principle of a military service of one man from each homestead. Finnish troops served as integral constituent parts of the Swedish army. In the sixteenth century there were about 4,000–6,000 Finns under arms. In times of war, the contingent had to be constantly replenished by renewed recruitment. During the Thirty Years' War,

the maximum number of Finns in the Swedish army of 40,000 men was about 18,000. In addition to the Swedes and Finns, there were mercenary troops from different European countries, hired with money raised from taxes, customs revenue, French subsidies, or German booty. The Finnish contingent was especially numerous in the garrisons of Ingria, Estonia, and Livonia. The long wars bled the country white, while the men took part in all the violence and destruction of a 'religious' strife. Three hundred years later it was proudly reported that people in central Europe still prayed *de agmine haccapellorum salve nos Domine*.³ At home, the country was spared enemy attacks thanks to the forward defence line of the Ingrian castles.

Sustaining a Great Power position surpassed the human and economic resources of the Swedish Empire. Peace, first after 1648, and again after 1658–60, meant the end of booty and foreign subsidies, retrenchment was compulsory, and the military machinery soon lost its sharpest edge.

Peacetime service was regulated in the 1690s on the basis of the *indel* system, where peasant households were obliged to hire a man for the army and to pay him with a plot of land on which he could earn his living as a crofter. Officers were given estates on which they could live as gentleman farmers. The system was economical, as the government only needed to pay cash for weapons and arms. It also made mobilization faster than recruitment had been, and guaranteed a minimum training, but, of course, the military value of the peasant troops could not be compared to that of regular paid armies. The Finnish *indel* troops consisted of about 6,000 infantry, 3,000 cavalry and 600 seamen, with eight enlisted infantry regiments and one artillery regiment in addition.

3 In fact, people in Europe did not know the nationality of the various troops of the Swedish army, cf. Lappalainen, "Ex agmina..." The name *haccapellorum* or *hakkapeliitta* comes from the Swedish war cry *hacka på*, translated into bad Finnish as *hakkaa päälle*, i.e. strike on.

For a thorough history of the Swedish Imperial wars, see Englund, *Ofredsår*. For the wars in Finland, see Hainari, *Suuri venäläissota 1495* (the Great Russian War); Juweliu, *Suomen sotahistorian pääpiirteet vuoteen 1617* (Finnish Military History); and Virkkunen, *Vanhan vihan aika* (the war of 1570–95 and the consequent peasant rebellion).

The conquest begins

Part of the formerly Swedish Finland was transferred to the Russian Empire as a result of the Great Northern War of 1700–21. The Russian victory was due to the revival of the country during the seventeenth century after the chaos which had paralysed Muscovy after Ivan the Terrible. Under the Tsars Mikhail Romanov (1613–45) and Aleksei Mikhailovich (1645–76) the revival went on slowly and fitfully, with serious setbacks. Russia's growing strength, however, made possible the conquest of Smolensk and parts of the Ukraine in the 1660s, but the attempts to render harmless the Crimean Tartars miscarried.

Tsar Peter (1689–1725) determined definitely to put an end to Russia's fatal military backwardness. He considered free access to the sea and to the West vital for his modernizing programme. That made Turkey and Sweden his enemies, because these powers sat athwart the routes from Russia to the Mediterranean and to the Baltic Sea.

In addition to the landed cavalry and militia infantry, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries soldiers enlisted in the Russian army had been organized into infantry, musketeers, and artillery regiments, but only intermittently. Now, Peter dissolved these obsolete and reactionary detachments. Instead, peasant serfs were recruited for lifelong military service and trained into a modern standing army of infantry, cavalry and artillery regiments, and also into sailors of a modern navy. The nobility was forced to serve the Tsar as officers or officials. The human and financial cost was immense, but Russia was saved from the fate of becoming a victim of Western imperialism, as the oriental Empires became; instead, Russia turned herself into an Empire.⁴

The Swedish army and navy had enjoyed an uninterrupted series of victories for more than a century. Against this daunting enemy, Peter was able to join other victims of Swedish expansion, viz. Denmark, a few German principalities, and Poland. The beginning of the war was disastrous, however. Charles XII's army knocked Denmark out in the very beginning, and in a lightning operation destroyed a Russian army of 40,000 men with his 10,000 at Narva in Estonia. After that, the Swedes carried out a lengthy series of campaigns in Poland, compelling Saxony, in 1707, to withdraw from the war and Poland to accept a Swedish puppet for her king.

4 An example of the innumerable works dealing with Peter I: Tarle, *Russkii flot i vneshniaia politika Petra I.*

Egged on by the disaster which his raw recruits had met at Narva, Peter continued his reforms and plans of expansion with increased energy. In a continuous campaign, his troops wore down the small Swedish garrisons in the Baltic countries. In the very beginning, they conquered Nevanlinna (Nyenschantz) and Schlüsselburg, the Swedish forts on the Neva line. In 1703, Peter founded the fortress of Peter and Paul in Jänissaari (Hare Island) in the delta, with a naval base or 'Admiralty' on the opposite side of the river. Kronschlott, later Kronstadt, was established on the Retusaari or Kotlin Island to protect the access to the river from the sea. In Estonia, Narva and Tartu (Dorpat, Iurev) were conquered in 1704. Thus protected, the city of St Petersburg started growing around the military and naval installations. Counter-attacks from Finland were easily fended off.

The battle of Poltava in 1709 proved Peter's confidence to be well-founded. Momentarily, the battle may have been close to a Russian defeat, but it was inevitable that sooner or later the poor and thinly-inhabited Sweden and its hardened but worn-out army would fail to withstand the growing might of Russia.⁵

Next year, 1710, the Karelian Isthmus with Viipuri, the central town of the region, was conquered. The siege was led by Admiral Fedor Apraksin. The advance further west was interrupted by a new threat from the south, where Charles XII had escaped from his defeat to Turkey and managed to make the Sultan declare war on the Tsar. In 1711, Peter was practically defeated by the Turks, who, however, gave up their advantage and accepted the return of Azov as a sufficient price for releasing the Russian army they had surrounded.

With remarkable confidence, the centre of gravity of the Russian state was transferred from Moscow to the Finnish marshland inside the Swedish Empire, with peace far from sight. In 1712, St Petersburg was officially made the capital of the Russian state. Next year, the Russian army continued its advance to the north-west, ably supported by Peter's young navy. The Russians landed at Helsinki, with Peter and Admiral Apraksin in command, and marched to Turku (Åbo). Troops led by Prince Golitsyn chased the fleeing Finns, a weak army of boys and invalid soldiers, who vainly tried to stand against the attacker at Napue (in Isokyrö, Storkyro) in 1714. In that year the Russians also defeated a Swedish naval detachment at Hankoniemi

5 Englund, *Poltava*.

(Hangöudd in Swedish, Gangut in Russian). The Tsar's army occupied the whole of the country, and the supremacy of his navy made possible raids from Åland over the sea to the Swedish coast. The purpose of these operations was to make the enemy admit defeat and the subsequent Russian dominion over the Baltic Sea.⁶

The British were to a degree concerned in the conflict in the Baltic region, from where they imported tar, hemp and timber for their naval needs. In 1715–18 they sent fleets to the Baltic to check the Swedes, but then, in 1719–21, alarmed by the growth of Russian might, started to support Sweden.⁷ However, they were not able to prevent the Russians from crossing the sea over ice from Åland to Sweden. Even in summertime, ships of the line could only with difficulty intervene in the operations of coastal galleys in the archipelago.⁸

In occupied Finland, guerilla bands sometimes rose against the Russians, who answered by taking their customary revenge of laying waste the country, while the Cossacks had their usual fun with the inhabitants. Booty was taken and taxes collected, and Finns were abducted for forced labour in Russia or to be sold on the Asian slave markets. Similar measures were also taken in Estonia and Livonia. Apart from being the normal method of warfare – booty was a welcome supplement to the meagre pay of the soldiers – these measures were calculated to prevent Sweden from using the resources of these countries in any future war of *revanche*.

Finland was placed under the military governorship of Prince Menshikov at Viipuri and Admiral Apraksin in the West. The daily routine of administration, under the great admirals, was carried on by Ivan Shuvalov at Viipuri and Mikhail Golitsyn in Turku. As the war went on and on, in 1717 the military administration in western Finland was replaced by an attempt at civil government headed by Count Douglas, who had been made a prisoner of war at Poltava and had gone over to Russian service. Regular and extraordinary taxes were collected. Charles's conscriptions had exhausted the country, but fresh

6 A handbook on Russian naval operations is: *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota 1696–1996*, vols. I–III.

7 Kennedy, *The rise and fall of British naval mastery*, p. 105.

8 Detailed descriptions of the Russian operations on land and sea: P.O. Bobrovskii, *Zavoevanie Ingrii Petrom Velikom 1701–1703 gg.*; A.Z. Myshlaevskii, *Severnaia voina na inzhernerskom i finskom teatrah v 1708–1714 g.*; Myshlaevskii, *Voina v Finliandii v 1712–1714 godakh, sovmestnaia operatsiia suhoputnykh armii, galernago i korabel'nogo flotov.*

groups of youth were now reaching military age and in 1720 about 1,500 recruits were taken into the Russian army.

When the war ended, at long last, in 1721, with the peace of Uusikaupunki (Nystad), Peter annexed Ingria, Estonia and Livonia to his Empire. In Finland, he kept the Karelian Isthmus and the Käkisalmi region (which was close to Lake Ladoga, and had not been a constituent part of the Swedish Kingdom but an occupied province under a governor general) with the towns Viipuri, Käkisalmi (Kexholm in Swedish, Keksgol'm in Russian, the modern Priozersk), and Sortavala. This area was annexed as a glacis for the defence of St Petersburg, but the rest of the exhausted country was returned to Swedish sovereignty. The Great Power interlude in Swedish history was over and Russia inherited the *dominium maris Baltici* from Sweden. Peter took the title of Emperor in order to express his Western orientation and to stress his equality with European monarchs; the title also embodied the idea that he was not only a Muscovite Tsar, but the sovereign monarch of all his peoples.

22

For two decades, the Swedes tolerated their fate as a second-class power, but by the end of the 1730s a new generation had grown up who had no immediate memory of the terrible Great Northern War. They dreamed of *revanche* and deemed the moment propitious in 1740, when Russia got into renewed difficulties with Turkey, and the problems of the Austrian succession were looming, not to speak of the problems of succession to the throne of Russia with the death of Empress Anna. Without any serious preparation, the Swedish revanchist party declared war in 1741. They hoped that Princess Elizabeth, the daughter of Peter the Great, would be grateful for the opportunity of seizing power, which the suddenly materialized Swedish threat created for her. Elizabeth did carry out her coup and was made Empress, but she responded to the Swedish 'help' with a military offensive. In the battle of Lappeenranta (Villmanstrand), Finnish regiments fled first, and the Swedes soon followed their example. The Swedish war of *revanche* thus turned into a defeat because of amateurish leadership and lack of training. The Russian troops were ably led by Peter de Lacy, the cosmopolitan Russian general, already distinguished in Peter the Great's wars, and by James Keith, previously a supporter of the Stuarts, and later a Prussian Field Marshal.

Empress Elizabeth may have planned to annex the whole of Finland in order to prevent future surprise attacks against the Imperial capital. In the spring of 1742, she published a manifesto exhorting the Finns to evict the Swedes and to elect a Grand Duke of their own. If they accepted, the Empress would protect them; if not, to her regret, she

would be compelled to destroy the country with fire and sword.

The Empress probably knew that Finns were dissatisfied with the weak Swedish interest in the security and welfare of the eastern half of the kingdom. The imperial manifesto was obviously aimed at separating them from the Swedes and at paralysing their opposition to a Russian conquest. After the whole of Finland had been conquered, and much more easily than had been expected, the manifesto was not mentioned again, and Finnish petitions for the election of the promised Grand Duke were ignored. Dismayed, the Finns soon rediscovered that they were good Swedes, after all, although they did not go as far as to rise against the Russian occupation.

Whatever Empress Elizabeth may have meant with her manifesto, the seeds of the idea of an autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland had been sown and were to take root in time.

Elizabeth's generals were eager to take all Finland or, at least, most of the southern part of the country westwards to Hankoniemi, in order to possess both sides of the navigation passage through the Gulf of Finland. In the end, however, Elizabeth desisted from taking the whole country and was content with only a small additional zone in the south-eastern part of Finland. In the peace of Turku, in 1743, three small towns, Hamina (Fredrikshamn), Lappeenranta (Villmanstrand) and Savonlinna (Nyslott), were added to Russian Finland, and the border was drawn along the River Kymijoki and the inland lakes. Annexing more of the barren country probably seemed unnecessary to the Empress, as she had compelled Sweden to accept her protégé, Adolf Fredrik from Holstein, as Crown Prince. She thus believed she had the whole kingdom under her thumb.

After the war the Swedish government constructed a new naval fortress, called Sveaborg, on a few islands in front of the small town of Helsinki (Helsingfors). The fortress was intended to make the Finns feel safe and more attached to the kingdom. It was also to cover the navigational passage from the east towards Stockholm against Russian surprises. From the Russian point of view, the new fortress, with a coastal flotilla based there, threatened to cut the waterway from St Petersburg and Kronstadt to the Baltic Sea.

On the Russian side of the new border, fortifications against the west were constructed at Hamina, Lappeenranta – there was also a flotilla on the Saimaa lake – Taavetti (Davidstad) and a few other points.⁹

9 Ranta, *Lappeenrannan kaupungin historia*, vol. 2, p. 491, et seq.

Russian Finland in the eighteenth century

24

In Russian Finland, the inhabitants continued speaking Finnish or Swedish or German (a few merchants of German origins). The region was administered in the Swedish language and according to Swedish laws and customs, with a Baltic German influence felt in the higher echelons and among educated people in Viipuri. The Lutheran church worked on as before, with some of the clergy trained in Turku. As in other recently conquered areas of the vast Empire, the process of spontaneous Russification went on rather slowly in the absence of a purposeful unificatory policy. After 1721, Viipuri was governed by a military governor, and after 1743 the province was organized as a *guberniia*, at times under a Governor-General aided by a civilian and a military governor. Commercially, the area was fairly prosperous, thanks to the export of sawn timber from Viipuri. On the other hand, many free peasants were made tenants of Russian absentee *pomestniki* (landlords). The nearby city of St Petersburg attracted a growing amount of Finnish labour, and by the end of the century the region began to feel a more intense Russian influence in its everyday life.

The main interest of Empress Elizabeth was directed towards Central European conflicts and the Tartar-Turkish borders, while the north-western direction was accorded only secondary attention. The Russian Baltic fleet was neglected and carried out operations of only limited importance in the Seven Years' War.

Empress Catherine II (1762–96) expressly tried to revive the military and naval traditions of Peter the Great. The navy was reorganized and a Mediterranean squadron established, the carving-up of Poland was started, and the Turks and Tartars were rolled back in successful wars. The Crimea was made a protectorate in 1774 and annexed in 1783. Catherine dreamed of further expansion in the south, and had her eldest grandsons christened Alexander and Constantine after the great Macedonian and Roman conquerors, although the third one was called plain Nicholas.

The main interest of the Empress thus turned towards the west and south-west, but some attention had to be paid to Baltic affairs. In 1780 Catherine, with Prussia, Austria, Sweden and Portugal, planned an Armed Neutrality to protect merchant ships against the privateering and blockade measures of the British and their rebellious American subjects. If enforced, Armed Neutrality would have made the Baltic Sea a Russian *mare clausum*, which would have been against the naval principles and commercial interests of Britain because of the importance of Finnish tar and Russian hemp for British shipbuilding.

But the participants were not united enough to try really to carry out their intention. For the Russian navy, it might have been problematical because of the numerous British officers serving in Russian ships. Peace therefore reigned in the North until again disturbed by the Swedes later in the 1780's.

In Sweden, governed in a proto-parliamentary system after the defeat of 1721, bribes to governing parties had guaranteed Russia more influence than the fact of King Adolf Fredrik's being a *protégé* of Empress Elizabeth, for his constitutional position was weak. His successor, King Gustavus III, took the reins of government firmly into his hands in a coup in 1772. The new king tried to rid his kingdom of Russian tutelage and sought perhaps to play a European role in leading a movement against the growing power in the east. Again, a successful foreign policy was necessary for consolidating his position at home, where opposition was growing against his absolutist tendencies.

25

Russia's new Turkish war in 1787 seemed to provide the right chance and a Swedish offensive occurred in 1788. The King planned to attack St Petersburg in a pincer movement. A land army was to advance from the north through the Karelian Isthmus, while a landing was to be made south of the Russian capital. Peace was to be dictated, the areas lost in 1721 and 1743 recovered, and Sweden's Great Power position enhanced.

The offensive ended in a fiasco, because the King's officers refused to obey the unconstitutional order to attack. They had reason enough for their disobedience. Most of them belonged to the nobility, who had lost much of the power they had held before 1772 to the King; several of them also were reminded of what had happened in 1700–21 or 1741–43 and feared provoking a new Russian occupation of Finland, which might also have brought with it the loss of their estates.

There was treason, too. A few officers were dissatisfied with the King's adventurous foreign policy and the loss of their influence on government, as well as their slow advance in the military career. Perhaps some of them were influenced by the then modern ideas of the French philosophers and American separatists. The officer plotters planned to separate Finland from the mother country and to transform it into a gentry republic under Russian protection, but free from the compulsory service of the Russian nobility. Voluntary submission to Russian power would, it was hoped, spare the country a renewed conquest and occupation.

Catherine accepted the idea of the Finns separating from Sweden, a recommendation by Colonel Göran Magnus Sprengporten, who had

left the service of the Swedish King earlier to enter the service of the Empress in 1786. But she did not aid the separatists in any material way. Alone, they were unable to achieve anything, because the idea of surrendering to Russia, the hereditary enemy, was alien to the majority of Finns.

By deft political operations, Gustavus III succeeded in overcoming both the constitutional and the separatist aspects in the opposition against him by blending and then thwarting them so that even later historians have had difficulties in unravelling the tangle. The other Estates, especially the peasants, supported the King against the noble plotters.

In spite of its inglorious start, the Swedish offensive disturbed the concentration of Russian forces against Turkey; a naval detachment was detained in the Baltic, because St Petersburg had to be secured against the potential threat. After Gustavus had recovered his position and made his troops obey, a few inconclusive battles took place. A Swedish fleet was soundly beaten by the Russians at Ruotsinsalmi (Svensksund, Rochensalm) in 1789, and, in 1790, with the King aboard, closely escaped annihilation at Viipuri, but was able to defeat the Russian coastal fleet at Ruotsinsalmi a little later in the same year. With the main Russian forces tied down in the Turkish war in the south, the Swedish army was able to defend the Finnish borders, while a Danish attack in the south of Sweden was easily fended off. It was evident, however, that Sweden had no chance of making any useful advance in the east.

Russia, too, was ready to make peace. With a serious war in the south, with the unsolved problem of Poland, and with the new threat from the French revolution, Catherine decided to desist from further operations in the north-west. The peace of Värälä in 1790 confirmed the territorial status quo ante bellum.

Having successfully avoided defeat in a war against the eastern colossus, Gustavus had somewhat improved his internal and international standing, although, in fact, his comparative success was due to Russia being mainly occupied in the Turkish war. He legalized his near-absolutist power with an addendum in 1789 to the Constitution of 1772. Denied legal methods, the dissatisfied plotters among the nobility took revenge by the regicide of 1792.

Russia's war against the Turks was concluded in 1791 with the peace made at Jassy. The Empire gained a broader access to the Black Sea and was confirmed in its possession of the Crimea. Then Poland could be divested of further slices of its territory in 1793 and the rest of the unhappy kingdom was divided among the neighbouring states in 1795.

The north-west glaxis of the Russian capital was further fortified against the possibility of a renewed Swedish surprise attack. Suvorov himself was for a time (1791–92, 1795) occupied in directing this work. He was ably assisted by Fabian Steinheil, who as a young captain had been transferred to the province in 1788 to fend off the Swedish surprise attack, and had remained in military-topographical service there; later, he was to play an important role in the history of the country. The defences of Viipuri were strengthened, the forward positions of Hamina and Lappeenranta were extended, as also were the naval forts of Ruotsinsalmi, Kymminlinna (Kymmenegård) and Svartholma. The work was continued intermittently under Emperor Paul (1796–1801) and Alexander I. Between 1803–08 Engineer General Paul van Suchtelen led the work.

The slow process of assimilation in the Karelian province went on. The Russian language seeped into the administration. For military administration there was a district staff at Viipuri.¹⁰ A few regiments of the Russian army were named after Finnish localities. One of Russia's oldest regiments, formed in 1699, was named the *Vyborgskii* after successfully taking part in the conquest in 1710.¹¹ There were also the *Neishlottskii* and the *Vil'manstrandskii* regiments, called after the Swedish names of Savonlinna and Lappeenranta, that is Nyslott and Villmanstrand. In the Imperial Guards there was a *Keksgolmskii* (Kexholm = Käkisalmi) infantry regiment, formed in 1710, which had taken part in the conquest of Finland in 1713, 1742, and 1788, and was to fight there again in 1808–09.¹² In 1806, a battalion of the Imperial Militia was established, which in 1807 was increased to regimental strength, earned Guards honours, and in 1808 was named the Imperial Life Guards Finland Regiment.¹³

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- 10 In 1800 there were 14 military inspectorates in the Russian Empire: St Petersburg, Finland, Moscow, Livonia, Smolensk, Lithuania, Brest, Kiev, the Ukraine, Dniester, the Crimea, Caucasia, Orenburg, and Siberia, each of which was to form a corps in case of mobilization. The more modern division system was adopted in 1806, with 18 divisions, the following year 24 divisions and 26 in 1809, in all more than 730,000 men. Beskrovnyi, *Russkaia armii i flot v XIX veke: Voенno-ekonomicheskii potentsial Rossii*, p. 193; Kersnovskii, *Istoriia russkoi armii*, vol. 1, p. 200.
 - 11 "Vyborgskii 85-i pekhotnyi Ego Imp. i Kor. Vel. Imp. Germanskago i Kor. Prusskago Vil'gelma II polk." *Voennaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. VII, pp. 98–99.
 - 12 "Keksgolmskii leib-gvardii Im. Avstriiskii Polk." *Voennaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. XII, pp. 487–489.
 - 13 Kersnovskii, *Istoriia russkoi armii*, vol. 1, p. 292.

In peace-time the garrisons in Russian Finland consisted of more than twenty thousand soldiers, while the coastal and inland lake flotillas consisted of 30–60 boats armed with 3-pound falconets. The *guberniia* formed a strong glacis for the defence of St Petersburg and a base for an eventual conquest of Swedish Finland.¹⁴

The small permanent garrisons were augmented in times of crisis by troops from all over the Empire, for example from Narva, Vologda, Vladimir, Pskov, Riazan, Velikie Luki. In the war year 1789, the nominal strength of the garrison in Russian Finland was 43,979 men, of whom 982 were killed in action and 191 wounded, 85 permanently invalided, and 1,728 died of sickness, while 470 deserted; of the remaining 40,721 men, 33,434 were fit for duty, 3,566 sick, and 3,721 on leave. In addition there were irregular troops, that is 2,200 Cossacks and 1,500 Bashkirs.¹⁵ Disobedient soldiers in garrisons in Russia were sometimes punished by expelling them not to Siberia but to the equally dismal Finland, which probably explains why there were numerous run-away soldiers on the lists.¹⁶

Finns were free from recruitment until 1797, after which about 5,700 men in all were recruited in eleven successive levies of recruitment. Each time one man was taken from 500, a burden made rather heavy by the fact that the period of service was twenty-five years.¹⁷ It is not (as yet) known whether any, or how many, Finns served in the regiments named after the Finnish localities; Karelian recruits usually served in the Russian navy, because "they were not afraid of water".¹⁸ The *Vil'manstrandskii* regiment was organized in 1805 in Tver, rather distant from Finland but populated, among others, by Finnish-speaking people, who had emigrated there in the seventeenth century.

The presence of Russian garrisons was tolerable enough for the small towns of the district the garrison was situated in. Field troops on the march could cause a heavy burden of quartering and carriage for the parishes they marched through, and the inhabitants were also forced to acquire firewood for the military. But, on the other hand,

14 A detailed but far from clear study is: Astala, "Venäläistä puolustus- ja selustoitointia Suomessa vv. 1808–1809 sodan edellä ja aikoina." (Russian defensive preparations and operations before and during the war of 1808-1809).

15 Borodkin, *Istoriia Finliandii; Vremia Ekaterina II i Pavla I*, p. 383.

16 Borodkin, *Istoriia...* p. 382.

17 Astala, *Venäläistä...* p. 195.

18 Astala, *Venäläistä...* p. 195.

the army did purchase many materials and thus stimulated commerce.

Later, when Russia had conquered the whole of Swedish Finland in 1808–09, the Viipuri province or Russian Finland started to be called Old Finland by the Russians, and the name remained in use in the Finnish historiography of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.¹⁹

The conquest of New Finland

The rest of Finland to the west of Viipuri Province was conquered by Russia in 1808–09. It was the third time within a century, and this time the country was not given back to Sweden.

The poor and sparsely inhabited country had no importance for its own sake for the Empire. The possession of Finland in 1713–21 and 1742–43 had been a means of pressing Sweden to concede Russian demands. Booty or taxes from Finland had been only an incidental benefit. After attaining its political goal, Russia had given the conquered country back to the weakened neighbour.

It seems, however, that from a strategic point of view Russia had reason to be displeased with the continued Swedish presence in Finland. Peter the Great had taken Viipuri in 1710 to form a glacis for St Petersburg, but it had not been enough, as was proved by the unpleasant surprise of the Swedish attack in 1741. For the further protection of the capital, Empress Elizabeth pushed the border a few miles more to the west, to the River Kymi, in 1743.

However, in spite of the threat from Sveaborg to Russia's navigation on the Gulf of Finland and the renewed attempt against the Imperial capital in 1788, Catherine II had deemed it best to leave the Swedish border on the Kymijoki. The danger was not great enough to warrant a campaign of conquest, especially at the time of the giant effort in the south and west, in Turkey and Poland, and in the absence

19 Lindequist, "Iso Viha" (the Great Northern War); Sepp, *Tsaari Pietarin sotasuunnitelma Viroa, Liivinmaata ja Suomea vastaan*. (Tsar Peter's war plan against Estonia, Livonia and Finland); Juva, *Idän uhkan varjossa* (Under the threat of the East), published in 1920, 1937, and 1943, reflect the Finnish view of Russia as the hereditary enemy: the Swedish loss of Finland was regarded as a Finnish loss, too. A classic of Russian military history is: Myshlaevskii, *Petr Velikii, voina v Finliandii v 1712–1714 godakh*. On the administration of the Old Russian Finland: Ranta, *Vanhan Suomen talouselämä 1721–1743* (The economy of Old Finland), Ranta, *Viipurin komendanttikunta 1710–1721; valtaus, hallinto ja oikeudenhoito* (The commandantship of Viipuri 1710–21; capture, administration and judicial system).

of diplomatic support from any European power.

Russia had grown to cover large areas of Eurasia, without any fixed purpose or plan, advancing and retreating step by step, provoked by enemy attacks as well as lured by weak neighbours. Seldom did there exist a definite programme of expansion, like Peter's quest for the open sea or Catherine's wish to emulate his great predecessor. Driven by religious enthusiasm, lust of conquest, economic need or greed, quest for power and glory, Russia advanced as far and as fast as she could, and stopped when opposition grew too strong for her.

30

The conquest of Finland in 1808–09 also came about for extraneous reasons, not as a considered move to the north-west. Under Emperor Paul, Russia had become involved in the all-European revolutionary war, with detachments fighting in Italy and Switzerland, and a squadron in the Mediterranean. Then, Alexander I joined the alliance against Napoleon but, after his army had been defeated at Austerlitz in 1805 and at Friedland in 1807, Alexander deemed it best to reconcile himself to Napoleon's wishes. The Treaty of Tilsit in 1807 still left Russia a Great Power, unlike Austria or Prussia, which were subjected to the French *diktat*. Russia joined the Continental Blockade, and also undertook to discipline Sweden, which had joined Napoleon's enemies in the preceding years and now refused to participate in his measures against Britain. France could not divert any forces to the north from the fight against the Spanish guerillas. It also seems that Napoleon hoped to turn Russia's attention away from Turkey, where French interests were vitally involved, towards the uninteresting north.

The Swedish King Gustavus IV Adolf refused to collaborate with the two Emperors. Reluctantly, pressed by Napoleon, Alexander I started preparations for war. He hoped to frighten the Swedes with a show of force, and disinformation about a mighty concentration of troops was transmitted to Stockholm. Trusting in British support and loathing Napoleon, the King remained stubborn. By the end of 1807 it seemed clear that he had to be persuaded by war.

In February 1808, three Russian divisions under the command of Count Friedrich Wilhelm von Buxhoevden crossed the Swedish border in Finland. The attack was made in winter, when ice prevented reinforcements from being sent from Sweden. The attacking force was rather small, in all 24,000 men, in order to facilitate supply in this wild country. The infantry was reinforced with artillery, cavalry and Cossack troops. There were four regiments of three battalions in each division, but while crossing Russian Finland each regiment strengthened two of its battalions from the third one, for which only cadres were left to be completed with new recruits. There were 20,500

men in the infantry, 2,100 in the cavalry, and 1,200 artillerymen with 66 guns.

Buxhoevden's chief of staff, General Paul van Suchtelen, had drawn up the plan for the offensive, on the basis of Suvorov's ideas from the previous century. He had been aided by Sprengtporten's knowledge of local conditions; the defector travelled with the Russian staff as a consulting general.²⁰

Lieutenant General Prince Petr Bagration's 21st Infantry Division was directed against the main Swedish army, which slowly retreated towards Hämeenlinna (Tavastehus) and from there to the north. Lieutenant General Prince Gorchakov's 17th Infantry Division advanced along the southern coast to Helsinki-Sveaborg and then to Turku. The 5th Infantry Division under Lieutenant General Tuchkov, for a while acting commander instead of Lieutenant General Kamenskii, was to attack through the interior of the country towards the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia and in the rear of the Swedish army. This was a novelty; earlier wars had been waged in the south only, but new roads built during the eighteenth century made it possible for small bodies of troops to cross the lake district in the north.

The Finnish troops of the Swedish army, crofter²¹ soldiers led by the gentleman-farmer officers of the *indelsta* army, with enlisted regiments as fortress garrisons, consisted of about 20,000 men in all, the field army about 12,000 men. The Russians were hardened in the numerous conflicts against Napoleon, while the Swedes had not recently been in battle. The Swedish leadership was also rather inept and their war plan extremely timid, with an extraordinary lack of enthusiasm for any real resistance: the army was to retreat until help

20 Tommila, *Suomen autonomian synty 1808-1819* (The origins of Finnish autonomy), p. 18. The war has been described in innumerable books, an unusually readable one of which is Schulman's *Striden om Finland 1808-1809*. The most detailed, almost unreadable account is the nine-volume military history of the Swedish General Staff: *Sveriges krig åren 1808 och 1809*. From the Russian side of the front, the best account is always Aleksandr Ivanovich Mikhailovich-Danilevskii's book *Opisanie Finliandskoi voiny v 1808 i 1809 godakh*, printed in 1849 and translated into Swedish: Michailofski-Danilefski, *Beskrifning öfver finska kriget till lands och sjös åren 1808 och 1809*, Tavastehus 1850.

21 A crofter was a tenant of a detached part of a farm, who remunerated the landlord, usually a peasant, by manual work. In the *indelsta* military system, a few peasants (from two to six) hired a landless worker as soldier and gave him a croft to live; weapons and uniform were supplied by the army; training took place during a few weeks in summertime.

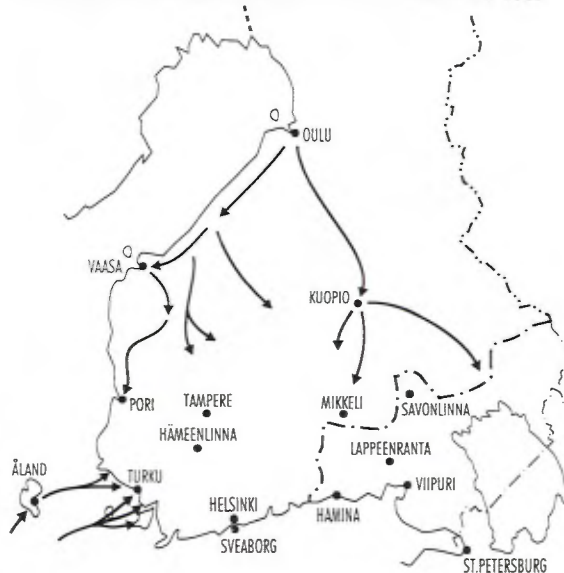
THE RUSSIAN CONQUEST OF THE SWEDISH FINLAND IN 1808-09

RUSSIAN ADVANCE IN THE SPRING OF 1808



32

SWEDISH COUNTERATTACK IN THE SUMMER OF 1808



RUSSIAN ADVANCE IN THE AUTUMN AND WINTER 1808-09



33

The Russian conquest of Swedish Finland in 1808-1809

The occupation of Southern Finland was an easy task for Russian army commanded by Barclay de Tolly in the spring of 1808, but the long distances and bad roads in the north made advance difficult and the Swedish counter-attack in the summer made necessary a strengthening of the Russian forces, which then slowly fought their way to the far north in the autumn of 1808 and even crossed the Gulf of Bothnia in the spring of 1809.

could be sent from the Swedish side of the Gulf of Bothnia in the spring.

The Russians took the fortresses of Svartholma in the east and Hanko in the west in March. Suchtelen easily persuaded the demoralized or defeatist officers of Sveaborg to surrender by the beginning of May, before any help could reasonably be expected from beyond the ice-covered sea. The Russians took about 6,500 prisoners of war, more than one hundred ships, and nearly one thousand fortress and ship cannons. Prisoners who gave an oath of allegiance to the Emperor were soon set free, but a few recalcitrants had to spend years in Russia.

It became obvious that Sprengtporten had been right in surmising that the Finns would easily be persuaded to give up. The upper-class Finns had perceived the growth of Russia's might and the increasing weakness of Sweden. Henrik Gabriel Porthan, a leading Finnish academician in the eighteenth century, had said that the Finns should

pray for Russia to succeed in making Constantinople her capital. Then Russia could leave Finland in peace under the Swedish sceptre; otherwise, with St Petersburg so close, sooner or later Finland would be dominated by Russia.²² The common people may have thought otherwise, but they had no leaders and no proper occasion for resistance.

Meanwhile, the 21st Division, tired by its rapid advance, and depleted by the detachments it had left to guard its rear communications, had been stopped near the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia. Nicholas Raevskii, who had led the advance to the north but turned back and suffered a minor defeat at Lapua (Lappo), was replaced by Lieutenant General Count Kamenskii. Tuchkov was dismissed, but reappointed after rehabilitation. The defenders advanced towards the south, but timidly. There were a few battles in which the Finnish soldiers of the Swedish army showed no lack of spirit, especially in the interior region of Savo, where they were ably led against the 5th Division. But southern Finland remained firmly under Russian occupation. In the lake district, a few operations were carried out by guerilla patrols against the long Russian supply lines.

Denmark having submitted to Napoleon, the Danish fleet was seized as a precautionary measure in 1807. Thus the Royal Navy had free access to the Baltic Sea. During the navigation season of 1808, the British Royal Navy supported the Swedes against the common enemy. Admiral Lord Gambier, soon succeeded by Vice-Admiral Sir James Saumarez, sailed with a fleet of ships of the line to the western coast of Sweden in the spring of 1808. The presence of the British warships protected Sweden from a landing, then being busily prepared by Napoleon's Marshal Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, and freed the Swedish fleet for action in the east. A British detachment visited the Baltic, but Swedish demands for a naval attack on the Gulf of Finland and a British landing on the coast of Finland remained without response. The main task of the British fleet was to convoy merchant ships through the Danish Straits and to keep an eye on Napoleon's troops in Denmark and the German coast. In a remarkably successful operation, a few thousand Spanish soldiers were persuaded to surrender and were sent home in British ships. The Russian fleet moved cautiously to the region of Hankoniemi, and, after a call for

22 Tommila, *Suomen autonomian synty*, pp. 59–60.

help from the Swedes, the British, in a skirmish, took and burned the *Vsevolod*, a Russian ship of the line, in August.²³

During these operations, the garrison in Russian Finland was maintained in strength by reinforcements from St Petersburg and the Baltic provinces, in spite of the demand for reinforcements on the Turkish, Austrian, and Prussian frontiers. The garrison in Old Finland secured the communications of the attacking army with Russia, stood ready to fend off any Swedish or British landing, and was able to reinforce the field force operating in Swedish Finland.²⁴ In May 1808, about 11,000 men from the 6th and 14th Divisions, part of them experienced soldiers freed from French captivity since 1805–07, others recently conscripted recruits, arrived for the army. The main body, about 7,500 men, was sent to the Savo front, while the rest, the third battalions of the regiments already in Finland, and a few regiments from the St Petersburg garrison among them, were to reinforce the depleted detachments on the other fronts.

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It seems that the rather recent divisional organization was loosened during the battles, when regiments, battalions and even companies were sent as detached units to the different fronts or directions where reinforcements were needed. In May the strength of the Russian army was 34,000, in July only 26,000.²⁵ By the end of the summer, the troops were divided in five provisional corps – not regular army corps – named after their chiefs, which is a bit confusing because the generals were often changed. Tuchkov in Savo had 6,617 men, Kamenskii was in northern Karelia with 10,435 soldiers, Golitsyn in Häme with his headquarters at Hämeenlinna (Tavastehus) commanded 8,554 warriors of his recently arrived 4th Division, Bagration was on the south-western coast with 8,641 men, and Wittgenstein on the southern coast with 10,006 men. In all there were 44,614 soldiers in the army, of whom 38,074 were infantry, 3,918 cavalry and 2,622 artillery, and, in addition, 3,238 sailors in the coastal flotilla.²⁶

23 PRO, ADM 1 – 6, Baltic 1808; ADM 1 – 7, Baltic 1808; Ryan, *The defence of British trade with the Baltic*; Ryan, *The Saumarez Papers*; Ryan, *An ambassador afloat*; Trulsson, *British and Swedish policies and strategies in the Baltic after the Peace of Tilsit in 1807*. These works were pointed out to me by Kari Murtola, who is preparing his study *Ison-Britannian Suomen sota 1808-1809* at the University of Tampere (The Finnish War of Great Britain in 1808–1809).

24 Astala, *Venäläistä...* p. 209.

25 Mihailovskii-Danilevskii, pp. 77, 132.

26 Mihailovskii-Danilevskii, p. 174. The exact numbers given are very much to be

Russian troops were positioned in small detachments and far from each other in the sparsely populated country where roads were few and the supply of the troops difficult. Due to the utter incompetence of the Swedish high command, the chance for taking advantage of the situation for countermoves was lost.

The rapid changes in the reported strength of the Russian army – from the original 24,000 to 39,000 in May and to 24,000 in July and then to almost 50,000 in September may denote casualties and reinforcements, but partly also different ways of counting, e.g. sometimes the total strength was given, at other times the number of combatants only; there may have been incompetent or corrupted accounting, too.

After the skirmish with the British, the Russian fleet retreated to Kronstadt. They had more ships than the British, but apparently no confidence in their fighting ability, because the navy had again been neglected and run down since the days of Catherine II. In the following summer, there were only a few minor operations by small coastal gunboats. In fact, the British were not interested in fighting the Russians but in trading with them; soon, in 1810, British merchantmen were already visiting Russian ports, and Russia's new customs regulations boldly ignored Alexander's promises to support Napoleon's Continental Blockade.²⁷

A small Russian vanguard had advanced to Åland, but the inhabitants expelled them from the archipelago, after which about 7,000 Swedes occupied it during the summer of 1808. The French and Danish threat tied down important Swedish forces on the southern front, but, protected by the British navy, the Swedes undertook landings on the Finnish coast, too. The operations were diffuse, cautious, and were easily repelled by the Russian detachments on the coast. It had been hoped that these attempts would inspire popular uprisings against the Russians, and uprisings did occur, but they were quelled with the customary severity. The risings seem to show that the Finns would have defended their country had their government in Stockholm and generals given them more efficient leadership. The difficulties with the guerillas in the interior with sparse habitation, long distances, bad roads, impenetrable woods, and without supply,

suspected, but there is no way of knowing the real strength of the detachments.

27 Jane, *The Imperial Russian Navy*, pp. 123–26.



"Prisoners of war in Russia. A watercolour by Johan Fredrik Malmberg 1808". The Russian conquest of Swedish Finland in 1808 brought with it the usual hardships of war, although afterwards the Finns rather easily accepted the fact of Russian superiority.

Photo: Museovirasto Neg 57040.

housing or proper clothing in autumn and winter weather, were all factors which made a deep impression on the Russian leaders, and had a lasting importance in military and political planning for the border country, as we shall see later on.

The naval threat had military importance, however. Numerous Russian troops were garrisoned in the southern part of the country to repel eventual further Swedish counter-attacks, and the force available for the northward advance was correspondingly weakened.

The regions of popular uprisings or guerilla activity excepted, the occupying forces behaved much more humanely and were better disciplined than in 1713–14 or even 1742. The population suffered more from the usual epidemics carried along by the invading armies than from any wilful violence. When Turku was taken in March 1808,

the Emperor declared his intention to annex Finland for ever, and an oath of allegiance was taken of the high officials. The commander-in-chief of the Russian troops General Buxhoevden was perhaps no military genius, but he tried to maintain peaceful conditions in the country and friendly relations with the population in order to facilitate the supply of his troops. In such a poor country, with long distances, supply was difficult and in fact "immense corruption took place in the supply of provisions, and the troops had to eat berries, roots and mushrooms".²⁸ The local administration co-operated with the conquerors to escape the consequences of any disorder. Commanders also made the population in the region where they operated swear allegiance, so that any opposition could be dealt with as rebellion.

In August–September 1808 the reinforced Russians started a new advance to the north. The operation continued during the autumn, with intermittent battles and an occasional cease-fire. By 19 November, the Finnish troops had left the country south of the River Kemijoki to the Russians and had retreated to the Swedish side of the Gulf of Bothnia.

Alexander I was dissatisfied with Buxhoevden, because the conquest of the country from a weak opponent had taken too long. His dissatisfaction was inflamed by Buxhoevden's enemies at court, mainly by the Minister of War General Arakcheev, and also Chancellor Count Rumiantsev, who deplored Buxhoevden's cease-fires, which caused him difficulties with Napoleon. Buxhoevden was replaced by General Bogdan von Knorring, who was appointed commander-in-chief in December.

In January 1809 the troops were re-organized for the operations in the following spring, with the idea of restoring the regular divisions. The corps were still identified with the names of their commanders. General Tuchkov and then Pavel Shuvalov commanded 10,000–11,000 men at Oulu, Golitsyn's 13,000 at Vaasa were reduced to less than 6,000 under Barclay de Tolly, Bagration had about 10,000 in Turku, Demidov 4,000 in Åland, and Wittgenstein at Helsinki commanded 9,000 men (4,000 of them garrisoning Sveaborg). There were a little over 1,300 men in northern Savo and Karelia under the military governor of Viipuri. In January the reported strength was 2,730 cavalry, 40,808 infantry, 1,963 artillery and 2,917 sailors, with 3,961 non-combatants, in all 52,439 men; at the end of April 1809

28 Kersnovskii, *Istoriia russkoi armii*, vol. I, p. 245.

the number of combatants was reported to be 39,000.²⁹

The army was ordered to re-open operations against the Swedes before the sailing season began. Knorring and Bagration were unwilling to risk their troops on the uncertain ice of the Baltic, and the Emperor had to send Arakcheev to Turku to force them to attack from Åland over the melting ice to Grisslehamn on the Swedish coast. The operation was warmly egged on by Caulaincourt, the French Ambassador to the court of St Petersburg.

In the north, General Pavel Shuvalov advanced over the river Tornio, and Barclay de Tolly crossed the Gulf of Bothnia over the ice to Umeå. The attacks were again aimed at pressing Sweden to accept its definite defeat. The aim was not that of further conquest, and the Russians soon retreated from their raids.³⁰ However, the defenders in the north felt trapped between the Russians in Tornio (Torneå) and Umeå. In March, they laid down their arms and Finnish soldiers were allowed to return home.

Barclay de Tolly then succeeded von Knorring as commander-in-chief and, after fighting ceased, was appointed Governor-General of the conquered Finland when the cantakerous Sprengtporen had proved impossible. In 1810 Barclay de Tolly advanced to become Minister of War and was succeeded by Fabian Steinheil.³¹ The new Governor-General was at the same time appointed commander of the troops in Russian Finland and bore the title of 'Commander of the Two Finlands'.³²

In the peace of Hamina (Fredrikshamn), signed on 17 September 1809, the Russian Empire annexed the following Swedish *län* (Finnish *lääni*, county or *guberniia*) to the east of the Gulf of Bothnia:³³

29 Mihailovskii-Danilevskii, pp. 174, 223–28, 282.

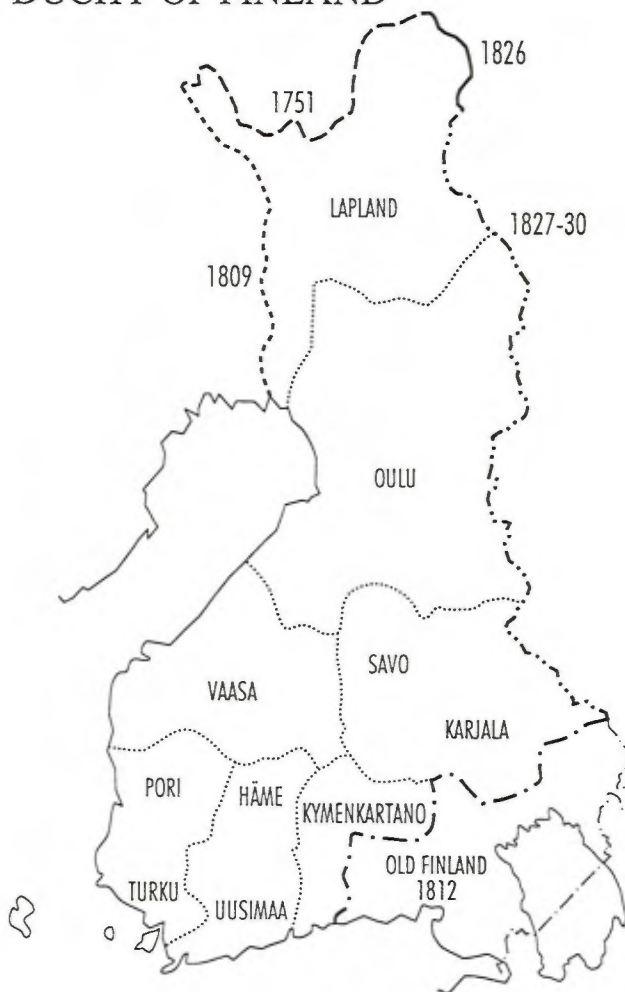
30 Martin Hårdstedt, *Kriget och lokalsamhället – Övre Norrland och kriget 1808–09*, forthcoming, is a study of the consequences of the war for civilian society, which had to feed the troops and horses, and provide shelter for the men.

31 On the war and the pacification of Finland, see: L.G. v. Bonsdorff, *Den ryska pacificeringen i Finland 1808–1809*; G.A. Gripenberg, *Suomen sota 1808–1809* (the war in Finland); Ordín, *Pokorenie Finliandii*; Osmonsalo, *Suomen valloitus 1808* (the conquest of Finland); Osmonsalo & Viljanen, *Suomen sota vv. 1808–1809* (The war in Finland); Schybergson, *Från Tilsit till Sveaborgs kapitulation*. However, the best account is written by an amateur historian Schulman, *Striden om Finland*. On Great-Power politics see: Tommila, *La Finlande dans la politique européenne en 1809–1815*.

32 Borodkin, *Istoriia Finliandii*; *Vremia Imperatora Aleksandra I*, p. 422.

33 Finland had not hitherto existed as a definable political entity.

THE FORMATION OF THE GRAND DUCHY OF FINLAND



The formation of the Grand Duchy of Finland

In the Peace of Hamina (Fredrikshamn) in 1809 Russia annexed Sweden's Finnish counties and part of Lapland up the River Tornio and Muonio, up to the border agreed between Sweden and Denmark in 1751. In 1812 "Old Finland" annexed by Russia in 1721 and 1743 was transferred to the administration of Finland. The border between Russia and Norway in the north was marked in 1826, and the borderline between Finnish and Russian administration was settled in the 1830's. Thus the Grand Duchy of Finland was delineated on the map, and in due time its population was to grow into the Finnish nation.

Turku and Pori (Åbo och Björneborg), Uusimaa and Häme (Nyland och Tavastehus), Kymenkartano (Kymmenegård), Savo and Karjala (Savolax och Karelien), Vaasa (Vasa), and Oulu (Uleåborg), as well as part of Länsipohja (Västerbotten) up to the rivers Tornio (Torne älv) and Muonio (Muonio älv), and Ahvenanmaa (Åland).

The published reports do not give any definite number of casualties; apparently thousands were killed and wounded in battles, but the fluctuation of the number of soldiers in tens of thousands must be due to sickness, primitive care for wounded, and disorderly supply.

PACIFICATION

The administration of the conquered country

41

The purpose of the war in Finland had been to press Sweden to accept the demands of Napoleon and Alexander; after that the conqueror was to leave the country. But when hostilities had been opened the aim changed. It seems that Emperor Alexander had decided to keep the conquered country in order to have at least some booty to show for his alliance with the detested French, which caused commercial difficulties in the important trade with the British and prevented any advance in Poland or in Turkey. At the very beginning, Buxhoevden declared that the country would for ever be part of the Russian Empire, and similar declarations were made in St Petersburg, too, in April 1808.³⁴

The better-off Finns readily submitted to Russian rule. The Bishop of Turku instructed the parish priests to preach submission, and the members of the Court of Appeal hurried to swear allegiance. Submitting to the hereditary enemy was much more difficult for the common people, devoted to the King for centuries, but there was no one to agitate among them or organize their resistance.

In the spring of 1809, the representatives of the four Estates – nobility, clergy, burghers, and peasantry – were elected in accordance with the ancient (1617) Swedish parliamentary or Diet constitution but, of course, only from the conquered country, and convened to

34 Tommila, *La Finlande dans la politique européenne en 1809–1815*, p. 18.

meet Emperor Alexander at the town of Porvoo (Borgå). There they repeated their oath of allegiance in constitutional form. It is true that the Finns had sworn allegiance to King Gustavus IV Adolf in 1792, but, happily for their consciences, Swedish army officers, dissatisfied with the unhappy result of an inept reign, overthrew the King in March 1809 in the course of the disorder caused by one of the Russian attacks from Åland.

Alexander I confirmed his new subjects in their ancient rights, privileges, religion and constitution. Advised by his Chancellor Mikhail Speranskii and Sprengporten, the Emperor thus secured the loyalty of the recently conquered country. Of course, it could have been secured with military measures, but that would have necessitated maintaining numerous troops in the impoverished country, which would have been expensive; even the minimal Finnish guerilla operations had made the generals wary. Napoleon's marshals were having considerable difficulties in Spain, and it would have been equally difficult to seek and destroy guerillas hiding among the Finnish lakes and forests. All possible forces had to be kept ready for the war against Napoleon, which was ever more clearly threatening.

The Finnish peasants were pacified by the promise of the Orthodox Emperor to respect their Lutheran creed; nor was there any attempt to submit them to serfdom. Property was secure and trade within the country and over the Gulf of Bothnia with Sweden continued as previously, which satisfied the bourgeoisie. The Bishop of Turku was made Archbishop (in 1817), not only in recognition of his timely submission, but as a gesture to stress the independence of the diocese from the Swedish archbishopric of Uppsala.

Maintaining the ancient laws and administration unchanged implied one essentially new feature: to replace the central administration in Stockholm, new organs for Finland were created which were directly under the Emperor, independent of the Russian ministries in St Petersburg. A Government Council, in 1816 renamed the Imperial Finnish Senate, carried on the day-to-day administration in Turku, later in Helsinki which was closer to the new possessor of power. Alexander I took the title of Grand Duke of Finland, appointed a Governor-General to guard his new province, and a Committee for Finnish Affairs with a State Secretary, later Minister State Secretary, was established in St Petersburg. The administration was paid for from local taxes and customs revenues, which the Emperor left at the disposal of his Finnish government, instead of transferring them to the Imperial treasury.

It is not known what exactly Alexander I meant by the terms

'constitution' or 'nation' which he mentioned in his speeches to the representatives of the Diet. He talked with his trusted advisors of a regime based on legal limits instead of the practically unlimited absolutism in Russia, which presupposed superhuman qualities in the monarch; and of giving political existence to Finland. In practice, the separate administration, with finances of its own, grew in the course of time into a Finnish state. Finnish affairs were even later resolutely kept separate from the Russian central administration by Governor-Generals³⁵ as well as by Minister State Secretaries.³⁶ Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt, who had been a favourite of Gustavus III, entered Russian service in 1811 and obtained the confidence of Alexander I, was influential in the creation of this system. His successors in the office of the State Secretary continued the tradition in the following reigns of Nicholas I, Alexander II, and Alexander III.

By the peace of Hamina Sweden consented to the annexation of her Finnish provinces by Russia. The Russians wanted to push the border to the River Kalix (Kainuu), while the Swedes tried to keep the region retained down to the River Kemi, but after a long dispute the River Tornio was agreed on as a compromise. Russia took all Lapland up to the border line agreed by Sweden and Denmark-Norway in 1751. Thus, on the map, an arm was formed for Finland reaching towards the northern Atlantic. Losing Åland to the Russians was a bitter matter for the Swedes, whose capital seemed extremely threatened from the archipelago, but they were powerless to keep it from the mighty conqueror.

The inhabitants of Finland had been "good Swedish men"; the fact that 80% of them spoke Finnish, or that 50% of them were women, had no political or national significance. The new border was drawn irrespective of any ethnic point of view – such a point of view did not exist in 1809. Many Finnish-speaking regions in the north were left on the Swedish or Norwegian side of the new border, while most of the Swedish-speaking Finns remained in the new Russian Finland.

After the conquest, the victorious Russian troops were garrisoned

35 F. Steinheil 1810–24, Arsenii Zakrevskii 1824–31, Prince Menschikoff 1831–55, F.W.R.von Berg 1855–61, Platon Rokassovskii 1861–66, Nicholas Adlerberg 1866–81, and Ivan Logginovich Heiden 1881–97.

36 Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt 1811–13, Robert Henrik Rehbinder 1813–41, Alexander Armfelt 1841–76, C.K.E. Stjernwall-Walleen 1876–81, Th. Bruun 1881–88, Casimir Ehnrooth 1888–91, Woldemar von Daehn 1891–98.

in Finland. From the maximum number of 55,000, the troops were reduced to 30,000 by the beginning of 1812.

The Finnish troops of the Swedish army had ceased to exist with the surrender of 1809. The Russians enlisted a few Finns from the previous fortress garrisons, but this 'Ruotsinsalmi' detachment had no importance and no future. Finnish officers were allowed to continue living on their estates, although no military service was demanded of them; Alexander I thus secured their loyalty.

Sometimes people in Finland joked that "we are Russians now", but in fact the Empire was not regarded as ethnically Russian, and the Emperor successfully adopted the role of Finland's own monarch. A 'Finn' implied someone speaking Finnish, but equally well an inhabitant of Finland without regard to his language, and 'Finnish nation' meant those people in the country who belonged to one of the four Estates, loyal subjects of the Emperor. A nation as a conscious political entity in the modern meaning did not exist as yet, and the circle of people who were involved in politics was very small indeed, mainly officers and officials of the regime and in time a few students and professors of the University (transferred from Turku to Helsinki in 1827).

During the following century, about three thousand sons of the Finnish gentry sought service in Russia, and approximately three hundred of them reached the rank of general, admiral, or the equivalent position in the civil service.³⁷ At home, it was thought that it was important to have people in Russia who were loyal to their Finnish homeland and whom the Emperor trusted in Finnish questions, too, though a few of them were Russified. Problems emerged only with the conflict between Russian and Finnish nationalism at the end of the nineteenth century.³⁸ Knowledge of the Russian language was not demanded from students or from officials in Finland – there was a Russian language requirement for entry to the civil service, but it was not enforced as it was soon proved that Swedish-, German- and Finnish-speaking subjects in the country were completely loyal to the Emperor. Educated people were encouraged to become Finns, i.e. no

37 Screen, *'Våra landsmän', Finnish Officers in Russian Service, 1809-1917*; Screen, "Undersåte och medborgare: finländska officerare i rysk tjänst"; Pikoff, "Landsmän i ryska marinen 1808–1918"

38 Screen, *Mannerheimin muukalaisvuodet* (Mannerheim: the Years of Preparation), p. 33, 54.

longer Swedish patriots, though of course they continued to speak Swedish. French or German was used in correspondence with the government, court and society in St Petersburg.

The *indelta* military system remained in force, but only in principle, while in practice the peasants were freed from the upkeep of the crofter soldiers and paid a tax instead. The soldiers, who had lost their livelihood, were unhappy, of course, but in the agrarian rural society, dominated by peasants, poor landless people had no political importance.

With the dissolving of the ancient troops, the Finns were freed from the fear of having to fight against their former mother country. The Russians, on their side, could remain secure in the knowledge that any chance of organized armed resistance against the Imperial dominion had disappeared.

Of the previous military establishment, the officer's school was soon revived. Sprengtporten, during the time he had still been in Swedish service, had established training courses for officers at his official manor, Haapaniemi. The courses were now re-established as a school of topography, and in 1812 the school was transferred to Hamina (Fredrikshamn) and transformed into a cadet corps, similar to the prestigious Imperial Russian institutions. The Hamina Cadet School educated and trained Finns from the gentry to serve the Emperor in Finland and in Russia until 1905.³⁹

45

Sweden desists from revanche

Meanwhile, the Tilsit alliance of Alexander and Napoleon began to break up. Napoleon created a new Poland in the Grand Duchy of Warsaw out of Austria's and Prussia's Polish regions, which of course did not please the Russians. For its part, Russia was a very reluctant ally in Napoleon's Austrian war in 1809, in fact, of more harm than help. Worst of all, for Napoleon, was the fact that the Russians did not willingly observe the prohibition on commerce with England. A conflict between France and Russia was developing and was obviously soon to turn into war.

The threat of a war from Sweden, probably allied with France, was the reason why so many troops were maintained in the recently conquered but successfully pacified Finland.

39 G ripenberg & Ignatius, "Sotakoulut Suomessa" (Military Schools in Finland).

The Russian grip on Finland was even further reinforced, but again by political rather than by military means. In 1812 Old Finland, which had been taken in 1710 and 1742, was united with the New, i.e. the recently conquered, Finland. It obviously made sense to unite the two regions which were administered according to the ancient Swedish laws and customs. The border between the Russian and Finnish administration thereafter ran on the Karelian Isthmus a few miles to the north-west from the Imperial capital. This area, which had slowly started turning Russian at the end of the previous century, was now linked once again with pace of Finnish development. G. M. Armfelt, who had proposed the measure, wrote privately that even Russian Karelia, being in fact Finnish-speaking (but subjected by Novgorod in the Middle Ages), should also have been united with the Grand Duchy, but its history, customs, and religion, as well as the general political situation made such a union unpropitious. In the Russian capital some dissatisfaction was felt at the Emperor's over-generous gifts to the Finns, and Rehbinder, Armfelt's successor, even proposed giving back the Orthodox part of Old Finland to avoid trouble with influential Russian landowners in the region. Similar plans for uniting former Polish areas in the Ukraine and White Russia with the new Russian Kingdom of Poland after 1815 came to nothing, because the political climate had changed.⁴⁰

However, politically and strategically more important in securing St Petersburg from the north-west was the fact that Sweden had ceased to be a threat to the Russian capital. After their *coup d'état* in 1809, the Swedes had chosen Bernadotte, one of Napoleon's Field Marshals, for their Crown Prince and, in fact, Regent (King 1818–44). They naturally wanted to be on the victorious side in the European war that was then going on. Bernadotte, or Karl Johan as he was called after being adopted by Karl XIII, soon guessed, however, that his former master, Napoleon, was doomed. He changed sides and a treaty was signed on 24 March/5 April 1812 between Sweden and Russia. The new alliance was manifested in a meeting of the two rulers in Turku, where they agreed that Sweden was to take Norway as a replacement for Finland.⁴¹

40 Hovi, "Miksi Aleksanteri I ei palauttanut Puolan itäalueita Puolan kuningaskuntaan?" (Why didn't Alexander I reunite the Polish eastern regions with the Kingdom of Poland?)

41 Tommila, *La Finlande...*

The idea of *revanche* had to be given up by Sweden, and the idea of reuniting with the ancient mother country proved to be a futile dream in Finland. From the more than 30,000 Russian troops in Finland in the beginning of the year, the numbers were reduced to twenty thousand in the summer.⁴²

Russo-British relations also improved, with Suchtelen the Russian negotiator, and peace was signed at Örebro in Sweden on 6/18 June 1812. There was even a plan to carry out a joint operation under the command of Steinheil, with British ships and Russian troops from Sveaborg, Turku and Åland over the Baltic Sea to the Pomeranian coast. Nothing came of the idea, and soon Napoleon took the initiative into his hands.⁴³

A Russian fleet was based at Sveaborg under Admiral Sablin, with smaller detachments in Turku, in Viipuri, and at Oulu (Uleåborg), and further flotillas at Kronstadt, in Reval and in Riga. As no enemy existed at sea, after the British naval victories, the Russian ships were mainly used for transport purposes. Rowed gunboat and landing flotillas made themselves useful in small attacks against the enemy-held coasts.⁴⁴

47

Steinheil's corps against Macdonald and Oudinot

Napoleon first had the idea of starting his offensive to the east with the conquest of Riga and the crossing of the River Dvina, in order to advance on the Russian capital, but this plan proved impracticable because his enemies dominated the sea and would have threatened the left wing of the advancing force. Instead, Napoleon made his main thrust directly to the east, towards Minsk, Smolensk and Moscow. But he left a couple of corps under Field Marshals Oudinot and Macdonald threatening the Russian capital through the Baltic provinces; their first task was to lay siege to Riga.⁴⁵

The main Russian army was concentrated against the *Grande Armée*, but detached divisions were left to guard the Crimea and Caucasia, and Finland, too, insofar as Sweden was still deemed faintly

42 D. Buturlin, *Istoriia nashestvii imperatora Napoleona na Rossiiu v 1812-m godu*. SPeterburg 1823, vol. I, p. 87, cited by: Helme, *1812 aasta Eestis ja Lätis*, p. 87.

43 Beskrovnyi, *Otechestvennaia voina 1812 goda*, p. 134.

44 *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota*, vol. I, p. 166–167.

45 Beskrovnyi, *Otechestvennaia...* p. 157.

unreliable.⁴⁶ But soon Steinheil with his troops were ordered from the Grand Duchy to the theatre of war in the south. Reinforcements were badly needed against an enemy superior in numbers, and so it was decided to run the risk with Finland since Sweden was formally Russia's ally and the alliance had recently been reinforced by a new agreement. The Finns seemed pacified and loyal, and Napoleon had no navy in the Baltic Sea.

From the troops Steinheil took with him from Finland – 10,500 men – and from grenadiers from Russia, he formed an army corps of 15,000 men. Cadre battalions were left in Finland to mobilize additional troops. – When Steinheil crossed the Gulf of Finland in August-September 1812, more than five hundred men and six guns went down in a storm; an example of the uncertainties of operations over the sea. – At first, Steinheil's corps helped the garrison of Riga to withstand Macdonald, then the corps marched along the River Dvina and took part in the battle of Polotsk. Thereafter, Steinheil's troops formed an army corps in the army of General Ludwig Adolf Peter (Khristianovich, chevalier of St.George)⁴⁷ von Wittgenstein Count Seyn.⁴⁸ In November, Steinheil with his corps fought the retreating French at Borisov by the River Berezina.⁴⁹ It was reported that Steinheil proved a good, cool-headed soldier, not only a staff or topographical officer. His corps went on to battle against the French in the west, but the general himself soon took leave and returned to his post in Finland.⁵⁰ It has been said that Steinheil's troops fought well in the modern way – in battalion columns preceded by scattered sharpshooters – because of their battle experience in the difficult terrain and cold climate of Finland during the Swedish war of 1808–09, where line tactics had been proved outmoded.⁵¹ But they probably had learned something even earlier, in their battles against the French in 1799–1807.

46 Beskrovnyi, *Otechestvennaia...* p. 195.

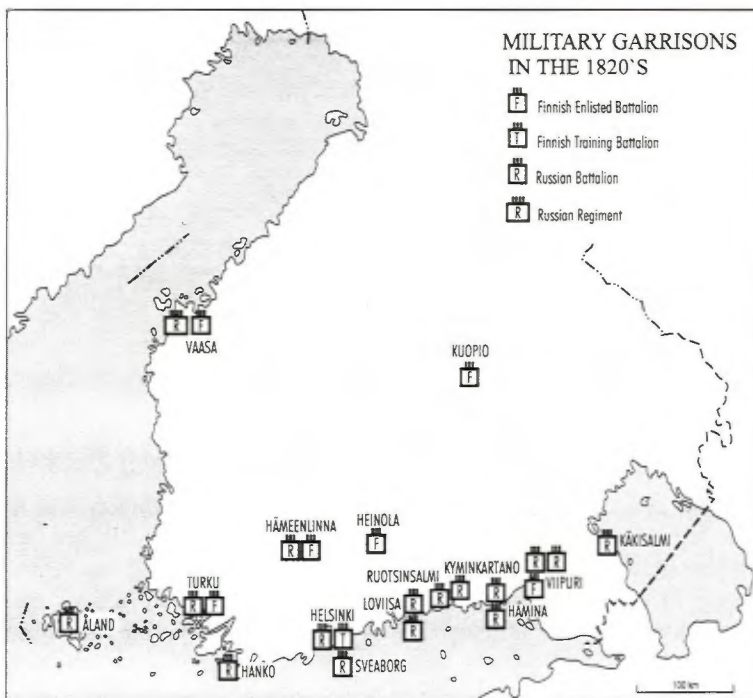
47 Lubchenkov, *Spasitel' grada Petrova; General-feldmarshal Petr Khristianovich Vitgenshtein.*

48 Helme, *1812 aasta Eestis...*, p. 87.

49 Beskrovnyi, *Otechestvennaia...* skhema 17 (between pp. 576 and 577).

50 Shteingel'. *Russkii Biograficheskii Slovar'*, vol. XV, pp. 412-15.

51 Helme, *1812 aasta Eestis...*, p. 29.



49

Military garrisons in the 1820s

The map shows the localities of the battalion headquarters (or regimental headquarters in Vaasa), while the troops were billeted partly in the surrounding countryside – sometimes quite distant, in the sparsely inhabited country – until barracks were completed in the following decades.

Garrisons in the Grand Duchy

After the war, Steinheil's troops returned to Finland. The force was organized into a division, which consisted of four infantry regiments and an artillery brigade. Three of the four regiments were named after Finnish localities, as indicated earlier on p. 27; there was the *Vyborgskii polk*, the *Vil'manstrandskii*, and the *Neishlottskaa*, but the fourth was *Petrovskii* or regiment of Peter. The Viipuri regiment had got its name after it had taken part in the capture of the town in 1710, but in general the regiments had not much to do with the towns after which they were named.⁵² The regiments may have had a few Karelian

52 "Vil'manstrandskii 86-i peh. polk". *Voennaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. XVI, p. 387.

recruits, but no Finnish recruits were taken into Russian regiments after Old Finland was reunited to the rest of Finland.

The coastal forts of Viipuri, Ruotsinsalmi and Sveaborg had their garrisons of fortress infantry and fortress artillery.

In the second infantry division of the Imperial Life Guards in St. Petersburg, the second brigade consisted, in addition to a Guards Jäger regiment, of a Finland(skii) Guards regiment.⁵³ The name was given to honour the regiment's participation in the conquest of the Grand Duchy⁵⁴ but otherwise it had nothing to do with Finland.

From 1815 to 1831 the Governor-General was aided in his task of Commander-in-Chief by a Staff of the Detached Army Corps of Finland. The staff had the usual departments of quartermaster-general, engineers, duty officer, military justice, and medicine.

50 For a long time after 1815 peace reigned in the Baltic region. The troops exercised mainly for parades. It was politically necessary to give the impression of Russia's military might to foreigners and to the Emperor's own subjects. Perhaps the leadership lacked an understanding of the practical needs of war and held the aesthetical factor of military uniforms, marching music, the whole artistic and decorative side of military life to be more important or more impressive.

Planning and preparing for real war were almost forgotten matters. Nevertheless, the disposition of the garrisons in Turku and Helsinki as well as at Hämeenlinna, Lappeenranta, Hamina and in Viipuri shows that the main strategic consideration was to secure the coasts of Finland against an enemy landing from the Baltic Sea, along with the politically most important towns and the road communications to St Petersburg. The interior and the north of the country had no great military importance and was garrisoned only by second-rate ethnic Finnish troops, an aspect which will be discussed later.

In the beginning, there were occasional conflicts between Russian soldiers and Finnish civilians, quarrels or fisticuffs, but no armed fights, though one Russian soldier was killed accidentally.⁵⁵ Barracks

53 von Stein, *Geschichte des Russischen Heeres vom Ursprunge desselben bis zum Thronbesteigung des Kaisers Nikolai I Pawlowitsch*, p. 359.

54 "Gvardiia." *Voennaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. XIII, pp. 200-204.

55 Castrén, "Turun ylioppilaat ja venäläinen varusväki 1810-1820-luvulla", (Students and the Russian garrison at Turku); Ven sot asiak 13, Ven sot asiak 16, National Archives of Finland, give a few examples of conflicts dealt with by the Governor-General's office.

started to be constructed to avoid quartering the troops in the homes of the inhabitants of the country, but progress was slow. The barracks constructed in Helsinki in 1817–33, for example, were giant enterprises in the small town, as were those constructed at Hämeenlinna in the 1840s and 1850s. Home owners were paid for housing troops by the local communes, and barracks were constructed by the Finnish state, which also paid part of the costs of the fortification works started at Bomarsund on Åland.

The Russians remained strangers in the country because of their different religion, language, and customs, but it seems that they were not regarded as an army of occupation. After completing their 25-year period of service, which alienated them from their homes, a few soldiers remained in Finland. A professor of the Russian language at the University of Helsinki, Jakov Grot, met a compatriot in 1846: "The inn was kept by a Russian tradesman Kononov. He had remained in Finland after the campaign of 1808 ... many of the Russians moving with the army remained here and started trading".⁵⁶ No study exists to show how many Russians remained in Finland, how many were married to Finnish women, how completely they remained Russian, Tartar, or whatever their ethnic and religious origin may have been, or whether they were assimilated into the local population. Jews and Muslims were not otherwise allowed to reside in Finland, but by the end of the century a population of a couple of hundred Jews and Tatars had settled in the country after completing their period of service in the army garrisoned there.

The militarily important fact about the troops was the number of bayonets and sabres they were able to take into battle, but of the men carrying the weapons the documents do not tell much. They lived under harsh military discipline, the regiment was their home and provider, the co-operative *artel* was their everyday sphere. Religion and language separated them from the local population, but not hermetically. Finnish women sometimes lived in the garrison in a more or less married state. In one girl's memory the picture of Russian soldiers remained rather positive: "There seemed to be awfully many of them. They all had similar clothes. They were very friendly; though I was a bit afraid of them, I liked them. They spoke a language I did not understand, they took me on their knee, stroke my long tresses,

56 Grot, *Matka Suomessa 1846* (A Voyage in Finland), p. 30.

and gave me sweets. And they smelled alien. [...] Their homes were very far away, and they longed for home, that was why we had to be friendly with them."⁵⁷ Social contact sometimes had the usual result: "Many a girl at Hamina lost her heart to a Russian soldier. One of them, my Aunt Lempi, was enamoured of a handsome musician in the Tsar's army [...] Soon, my aunt was expecting a baby by him. My aunt was twenty-four, the boy at most eighteen. I don't blame him for escaping when he had the chance".⁵⁸ Very rarely does an individual emerge from the faceless uniformed mass: "In the garrison there was one soldier, who from the first attracted the sympathy of all the small boys [...] Ivan was very small and pale, but he always smiled gladly and in a friendly fashion [...] and] tried to speak to us with expressions and gestures added to the few Finnish words he knew. [...] once Ivan came to bathe in the mill brook and somehow slipped from a stone into the water. He could not swim [...] Viki lifted Ivan from the bottom [...]and] said that he could be revived with artificial respiration [...]but] the captain of the Russian garrison [...] said that it was not necessary, because Ivan was so wretched a soldier."⁵⁹ The childhood memories cited above are from the final years of the period when Russian troops were present in Finland, random examples, but the picture of humble friendly men, not arrogant conquerors, has a certain degree of significance, because in those years the national conflict between the Empire and its border country already had estranged upper class Finns from social contact with Russian officers and officials.

At first, for the higher strata of society there were no great problems, because the gentry was traditionally cosmopolitan. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries noblemen had frequently transferred from the service of one monarch to another, without much national consideration. The better-off Finns made social contact with the officers of the conquering army while the war was still going on in the north.⁶⁰ When Tuchkov's troops approached Oulu in 1808, people remembered the destruction of earlier wars, but for the young demoiselles of the town the only problem was to guess whether the

57 Kilpeläinen, *Irja Kilpeläinen kertoo ja muistelee* (Memoirs of K.), p. 14.

58 Haavikko & Hämäläinen, *Ketunkivellä; Helvi Hämäläisen elämä 1907–1954*, pp. 34–35 (Life of Hämäläinen).

59 Nurmela, *Suuri pieni maailma*, pp. 67–70 (memoirs of N.).

60 This has provoked a few novels later when a more nationalist outlook prevailed, e.g.: Mika Waltari, *Tanssi yli hautojen* (Dancing on the graves, a novel from the time of the Porvoo Diet).

Russian officers would be better cavaliers than the Swedes who had only just left the town.⁶¹ During the following decades, Russian officers, e.g. v. Etter, Manderstern, Kaulbars, Wallerode, Traversé, Friberg, or Kantsov visited Finnish homes.⁶² The surnames of the visitors are a proof of the cosmopolitan nature of Russian government service. A few of them remained in Finland and became Finns. For example, Nikolai von Acht, born in Livonia, an officer of the Imperial Guards, took part in the Decembrist revolt in 1825, but was not banished to Siberia due to the intervention of the Imperial Chamberlain, General Christian Acht von Achtfelsen, but only demoted to the lowest grade and transferred to Warsaw; then, favoured by the Viceroy, the Grand Duke Konstantin, he was ordered to Finland, where he regained the rank of Major and married the flowerlike, fine-featured and blue-eyed, seventeen-year Sofia Charlotta from the wealthy merchant family of Gottleben.⁶³ The few Russian officers who settled in Finland were in time easily assimilated into the Swedish-speaking gentry of the Grand Duchy.

Evgenii Abramovich Baratynskii, a lieutenant in the Russian division in Finland, and no mean poet, admired the romantic Finnish nature in his poems. But, generally, Russians regarded Finland as a distant, cold, bleak country of forests and swamps.⁶⁴ It was a place where people still could be expelled instead of Siberia, as the Decembrist Vladimir Mussin-Pushkin was to "the distant *Petrovskii Regiment*".⁶⁵ The poet-journalist Faddei Bulgarin compared his service in Finland to Pushkin's expulsion to Caucasia, though he found the local society rather pleasant.⁶⁶ With a few exceptions, as those mentioned above, the Russian gentry, if they did not ignore the existence of the Grand Duchy, at least had no great wish to be appointed to serve in this inhospitable corner of the Empire. This Russian lack of knowledge and interest essentially helped the local gentry to keep the government posts of Finland in their own hands.

In Russia, Finns served the Emperor side by side with Caucasian

61 Wacklin, *Sata muistelmia Pohjanmaalta*, p. 130 (reminiscences of W.).

62 Ramsay, *Muistoja lapsen ja hopeahapsen*, vol. I, p. 131, 170 (memoirs of R.).

63 Leppänen, *Tulesta tuhkaksi; Emmy Achté ja hänen maailmansa*, p. 11–12 (Life of Emmy Achté).

64 Kiparsky, *Suomi Venäjän kirjallisuudessa*. Helsinki 1943, p. 23 (Finland in Russian literature).

65 Lehto, *Kytäjän kreivitär*, p. 20 (The Countess of the Kytjä Estate).

66 Bulgarin, *Sotilaan sydän, Suomen sodasta Engelin Helsinkiin* (memoirs of B.).

princes, Kalmuk khans, Greek expatriates, Baltic German barons, Polish pans, and, of course, Russian chinovniki. For example, of the family Furuhjelm, Johan Hampus served the Tsar as military governor in eastern Siberia, Karl Harald Felix governed imperial family domains in the Amur region, Sten Knut Felix, when a colonel at Bomarsund, became a prisoner of war in 1854, and afterwards led the military department of the Finnish Senate between 1862–82, and Johan Otto reached the rank of Lieutenant General in Russia; many other members of the family served in civil posts in Finland.

"In general the relations between Russians and Finns were good and natural" says the Russian historian Mikhail Borodkin.⁶⁷

Alexander I, with his policy and with personality, charmed the Finns, not least the ladies. He visited the Grand Duchy twice, first in 1809 and had a longer tour into the interior in 1819, and his visits gave rise to innumerable stories of a friendly, polite, and kind monarch.

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Finland had been conquered by the Russian army, which then left a few garrisons in the country, and in international law the country was part of the Russian Empire. But the conquest was not accompanied with the usual consequences: property had not been taken, the population had not been massacred, displaced or enserfed, and no invasion of Russian officials into the administration had taken place. Protected by the Emperor, Finns were able to live as they always had done, or even better. Perhaps they might have developed a modern society more rapidly if they could have continued their life as a Swedish province, but historical science cannot study something which did not take place. There might very well have become a period of Swedification in the history books and a story of Finnish volunteers seeking military training in Russia to liberate their country from the Western oppressor with the aid of the Eastern neighbour.

A Finnish contribution to the Patriotic War

When the previous Royal Finnish troops of the Swedish army had been dissolved in 1809, there had been talk of enlisting Finns into Russian service, which would have made possible the transfer of the Russian divisions from the Grand Duchy to other frontiers of the

67 Borodkin, *Kriget vid Finlands kuster 1854–1855*, p. 196.

Empire, and would have given employment to the substantial Finnish vagrant population.⁶⁸ Plans were made in 1809-11 for raising Finnish troops so as to make Finns protect their country and free them from having to house Russians. These plans remained on paper. But when Napoleon attacked Russia in 1812, G.M. Armfelt and others who were concerned about Finland's political future considered it embarrassing and harmful for Finns if they were to remain outsiders in the defence of the Empire.

National conscription was too revolutionary and too French an idea, and there was no hope of getting imperial consent to such a military system. Instead, soldiers were enlisted for six years. Three regiments of two battalions each were formed, with a nominal strength of 3,600 bayonets in all.⁶⁹ These regiments were classified as local troops, intended mainly for the defence of their own country in case of an enemy landing there, or elsewhere on the Baltic coasts.⁷⁰ The regiment in Viipuri was organized first, because in Old Finland the Russian recruitment system was still available, and one battalion of these troops was transferred to garrison duty in St Petersburg from 29 February 1813 to 31 August 1814,⁷¹ thus freeing first-line detachments for the battle front. No Finns were lost in action, but 25% of the men died of sickness in the unhealthy capital, 11% deserted, and twenty men were court-martialled.⁷²

The Finnish battalions were armed as jäger troops, i.e. light infantry, but in 1819 two of the regiments were transformed into infantry of the line. Line troops were armed and equipped for the local defence of border regions, but not for rapid movement in offensive warfare.⁷³

68 Den 15/27 Martii 1810, Hans Kejslerliga Maj:ts Nådiga Manifest angående de f.d. finska Militarien tillägne Löneförmåner mm.; dett 21 Maji, Hans Kejslerliga Maj:ts Nådiga Kungörelse angående Gemene Manskapet wid Indelte och Wärfwade Regementerne af den nu mera upplösta Kungl. Arméen i Finland. *Samling af Placater, Förordningar, Manifeste och Påbud, sam andre Allmänna Handlingar, hvilka i Stor-Furstendömet Finland sedan 1808 års början ifrån trycket utkommit.* Första delen 1808-1812. Åbo 1821.

69 RGVIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, Shtab voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh 1831-1864, Shtab otdel'nago Finliandskago korpusa 1815-1831, delo 573, Ukazy Aleksandra I i Nikolaia I o sozdanii natsional'noi militsii i egerskikh battalionov v Finliandii 1810-1827.

70 RGVIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 573 o finskikh voiskakh, 6. IX 1812.

71 Gripenberg, *Lifgardets 3 finska skarpskyttebataljon 1812-1905*, p. 5, 8.

72 Borodkin, *Istoriia Finliandii, Vremia Imperatora Aleksandra I*, p. 446.

73 Sometimes the regular army troops are called line troops in contrast to the guards,

As ordered in 1812, the first regiment consisted of the Turku battalion, with companies at Turku, Pori (Björneborg), Huittinen (Hvittis), and Tampere (Tammerfors), and of the Helsinki battalion, with companies at Helsinki, Hämeenlinna, Kangasala, and Hanko (Hangö). The second regiment had one battalion at Heinola, with companies at Hollola, Sysmä, Heinola and Elimäki (Elimä). A further battalion was located at Kymi (Kymmene), Viipuri, Käkisalmi, and Sortavala.

It seems that men eager to enlist in the battalions were not of the first quality, cajoled into joining by rose-coloured promises from the recruiters.⁷⁴ The battalion which had served in St Petersburg was dissolved after returning to Viipuri, its unreliable elements transferred to Hämeenlinna. The other battalion staff was quartered at Vaasa (Vasa), with companies at Vaasa, Kokkola (Gamlakarleby), and Saarijärvi.

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The Governor-General annually accounted for his Finnish troops. For instance, in March 1820 there were 3,785 men on the rolls.⁷⁵ In 1823 there were sixteen colonels or majors, 122 captains and lieutenants, 325 non-commissioned officers, 280 musicians, 3,745 privates, and 55 non-combatant soldiers.⁷⁶

State Secretary G.M. Armfelt deemed the military value of these troops to be rather low because they were trained for only short periods.⁷⁷ Every company was to assemble twice a year for church parade. Every summer new recruits were to be trained for twenty days, and then the complete battalion was to have a training period of four weeks in July. Then weapons and uniforms were put back into store and the soldiers were free to return home to work and earn money for their housing, upkeep and clothing. They were strictly forbidden to leave their home districts.

which may cause confusion and is better avoided.

74 Gripenberg, *Lifgarderts 3 finska skarpskyttebaltaljon 1812–1905*, p. 19.

75 Raport Finliandskogo General-Gubernatora o sostavlenii finskikh voisk, 25. V 1820. TsGVIA SSSR, fond 35, delo 6/247. Microfilm NL 189, National Archives of Finland.

76 RGVIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 573 o finskikh voisk, Raport o sostoianii finskikh voisk za minuvshago Avguste mesiatse, 12. IX 1823, Shteingeil'.

77 Included in: Materialy i cherty k biografii Nikolaia I i k istorii ego tsarstvovaniia; Kratkii ocherk po tsarstvo Polskomu, raport Rizhkago voennago, Lifliandskago, Estlandskago i Kurliandskago general-gubernatora, ocherk Finlandii 1825–1850 gg., pp. 182–83. TsGIA SSSR, fond 728. Microfilm NL 171, National Archives of Finland.

In 1817, to improve the training of young officers and non-commissioned officers, a training battalion of three hundred men or two companies (with weapons and uniforms for three hundred more men ready in store) was established, first at Parola and then 1824 in Helsinki. It remained in service all the year round. For example, in the summer of 1827 the 1st Battalion trained at Pori, the 2nd at Vaasa, the 3rd at Hämeenlinna, the 4th at Heinola, the 5th at Kuopio, and the 6th at Lappeenranta, while the training battalion stayed in Helsinki.⁷⁸ The Finnish troops were trained and exercised in a similar manner to the Russian troops, but until 1828 they were commanded in Swedish because the men did not know Russian.⁷⁹

The Finnish troops were paid for by the Finnish government, administered by the Military Department of the Senate, and inspected by a Senior Inspector heading an Inspector's Office, under the overall command of the Governor-General, who had an additional Senior Adjutant for Finnish troops on his staff. In the Main Staff⁸⁰ in St Petersburg, there was one officer and one official (*chinovnik*) for Finnish affairs. The Finnish regiments were commanded by a Finnish-born general, with the authority of a divisional commander, but aided by only two staff officers.⁸¹ Without a staff, the troops would hardly have been able to operate as a division, if ever called upon to do so.⁸²

Local regiments were not an exclusively Finnish feature; there were ethnically separate troops in other areas of the Empire. Princes or peoples who had voluntarily joined the Empire were allowed to keep a few traditional native detachments, which served as irregular reinforcements for the Imperial army; Bashkirs and Kalmyks had such troops, the Cossacks are the best known, and several Caucasian princes

78 RG VIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 583, kvartirnoe raspisanie divizii finskih voisk na leto 1827.

79 RG VIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 573 o finskikh voisk, Vypiska iz Vysochaishe utverzhdennykh postanovlenii Finskikh voisk.

80 *Glavnyi shtab*, a staff for military administration, with the General Staff one of its departments.

81 RG VIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 119, Otchet o voennom upravlenii Finliandskago General-Gubernatora i Komandira byvshago Otdelnago Finliandskago Korpusa General-ot-Infanterii Grafa Zakrevskago 16. III 1824–26. IX 1831. For an overview of Finnish military questions in the beginning of the Russian era in Finland see: Carl von Bonsdorff, *Finländska militärfrågor vid ryska tidens början*.

82 Until the reforms of D.A. Miliutin, corps and division staffs were occupied with regional military administration more than with operational or training questions; see Beyrau, *Militär und Gesellschaft im vorrevolutionären Russland*, passim.

were allowed to keep their life guards, as were later the Emirs of Khiva and Bokhara. The separate Polish army, commanded by the Emperor's brother Konstantin in Warsaw, was militarily the most competent local army.

The uniforms of the soldiers were regulated in every detail; by Imperial order, the Finnish troops wore the heraldic lion of the Grand Ducal arms on their buttons.⁸³ In 1820, the young Alexander Armfelt,⁸⁴ who was destined to succeed Reh binder in 1841 in the office his father Gustaf Mauritz had created, wrote that with the aid of its own military forces, Finland would be able to maintain her privileges and laws under the sovereignty of any foreign power should Russia ever collapse.⁸⁵ This was only the irresponsible dreaming of a young man, probably influenced by the anti-reactionary discussion in Russia which later resulted in the Decembrist conspiracy of 1825, but it shows that even a small military force was apt to inspire ideas about Finland being a nation able to fend for itself. Armfelt's dreams did not result in any practical conclusions, and in a riper age he was a most loyal servant of his Emperor as well as of his own country.

83 RG VIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 573, delo 573 shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh, Glavnyi Shtab, Obshchee Upravlenie 18. II 1819, "Ego Imperatorskoe Velichestvo povelet soizvolit..."

84 Alexander Armfelt was born 1794, entered the army 1814, took part in the war against Napoleon, was promoted captain, then served as aide for Minister State Secretary Reh binder, whom he succeeded in 1841 and was promoted *deistvitelnyi tainii sovetnik*, the civilian rank equal to full general.

85 "Coup d'oeil d'un patriote", 1820. Cited by Hans Hirn, *Alexander Armfelt, Ungdom och läroår intil 1832*, pp. 111-19.

Loyalty Tested, Proved, and Rewarded

NICHOLAS I AND HIS ARMY

Governing a *generalguberniia*

The Empire did not break down at the death of Alexander I, as Alexander Armfelt had forecast, but the Decembrist conspiracy of 1825 cast a shadow over the reign of Nicholas I for a long time. He resorted to a policy of maintaining everything as unchanged as possible against the menace of revolution, which had started from the West in 1789, from the Far West in 1776, and now seemed to threaten the ancient throne of Russia. The memory of the popular rage of the time of the Pugachev rebellion was still alive. The Emperor and his advisers may have understood that reforms were necessary, but more compelling was the necessity of avoiding an all-devouring chaos.

The Russian state rested mainly on military force, supported by dynastic loyalty, religious conviction, and bureaucratic control. Because the big wars of the previous reign had shattered the Imperial finances, Nicholas I had to reduce military expenditure and at the same time had to try to maintain his military might in an impressive enough fashion to fulfill its purpose.

In Finland, Nicholas I was feared and respected but also admired. He visited Helsinki in 1830 and 1833 and made quite an impression: "his ideal military personality, his majestic voice, his imperial countenance made ladies tremble with rapture, men with fright".¹

Nicholas's Finnish Governor-Generals Arsenii Zakrevskii (1824–31)² and Prince Alexander Menshikov³ (1831–55) had important

1 Schauman, *Kuudelta vuosikymmeneltä*, vol. I, pp. 101–02. (memoirs of S.)

2 Zakrevskii (1786–1865) had been a captain in the war of 1808–09 in Finland, and

tasks in the Russian government, too, and the everyday administration of the Grand Duchy was presided over by acting Governor-Generals. Alexander Amatus Thesleff had commanded the Russian division in Finland since 1819 and then had worked in several administrative posts until he served as Acting Governor-General 1833–47. For a while, the Finnish administration was divided into two branches: 1848 N.K. Muravev was appointed commander of the military forces in the border country, while Platon Ivanovich Rokassovskii looked after civilian business as acting Governor-General. But soon Muravev was ordered to the Caucasian theatre of war, and all the work of Governor-General was done by Rokassovski. In 1853, Menschikoff was sent as Nicholas's envoy to Constantinople and then to lead the Crimean garrison in the Crimean war, and Count Berg was appointed Governor-General on 7. XII 1854. Rokassovski was appointed his successor in 1861–66.⁴

Finliandskie troops

Troops garrisoned in Finland were called *finliandskie*, 'Finlandish', which may cause misunderstanding if it is translated 'Finnish', because it meant Russian troops in the Grand Duchy. They formed the Detached Corps of Finland, commanded by the Governor-General, General of Infantry Count Zakrevskii 1824–31. The corps now consisted of the 23rd Infantry Division of three brigades, each of two regiments of four battalions: the *Vyborgskii*, the *Vil'manstrandskii*, the *Neishlottskii*, and the *Petrovskii* infantry regiments, as well as the 45th and 46th Jäger Regiments; the infantry was supported by the 23rd Artillery Brigade of three battalions.⁵

The nominal strength of the corps was 17,080. During Zakrevski's period 6,979 fresh recruits joined the troops and 2,558 men were

had then taken part in the Turkish and French wars. He was in fact expelled from Russia to Finland by Arakcheev under Alexander I, but, as a strict disciplinarian, was favoured by Nicholas I and appointed Minister of the Interior in 1828 in addition to his Finnish office. "Zakrevskii, A.A.", *Russkii biograficheskii slovar'*, vol. XXIII, pp. 195–99.

3 Transliterated from the Russian the Prince's name should be written as Menshikov, but the Governor-General was registered in the Finnish House of Nobility as Prince Menschikoff.

4 "Rokassovskii, P.I.", *Russkii biograficheskii slovar'*, vol. XVIII, pp. 426–31.

5 Jäger troops had been established as light infantry to fight in free formation supporting the regular infantry columns with rifle fire.

transferred from troops in Russia, while 9,982 men were discharged. The actual numbers varied monthly from report to report, between 13,062 and 15,723.⁶

In 1831, the Detached Corps of Finland was abolished and its staff transformed into a smaller Staff of the Troops Garrisoned in Finland. Prince Menschikoff was appointed Commander-in-Chief of these troops when he succeeded Zakrevskii as Governor-General.

According to the policy of cutting down the costs of the enormous army, which Nicholas I had inherited from his brother, the division in Finland was reduced in 1833 to two brigades, each of two regiments, which consisted of three battalions and one reserve battalion each. In the first brigade were included the *Vyborgskii* and *Petrovskii* regiments, in the second the *Neishlottskii* and *Vil'manstrandskii* jäger regiments. The artillery brigade now consisted of one heavy, two light and one reserve batteries. In a further reorganization or reduction in 1835, the infantry and jägers were transformed into line battalions, six in each brigade. For three decades the regiments lost their historical town names. Supernumerary infantrymen and jägers were sent to Russia to the grenadier corps and the navy.⁷

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In the 1835 reorganization, the artillery brigade was disbanded, but a few field guns were added to the local fortress artillery to serve the line battalions in case of need. This fact further underlined the defensive character of the army in Finland, as did the absence of cavalry, the arm for a strategic offensive.

It is true that there was one regiment of Don Cossacks in Finland, who might have been useful for raids and reconnaissance in war. In peacetime they were dispersed in small detachments in several towns in the country, for guard duties and for the purpose of keeping an eye on the population. The Cossacks, for example Lieutenant Colonel Denisov's regiment of Don Cossacks in 1824,⁸ served their period of

6 RGVIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 119, Otchet o voennom upravlenii Finliandskago General-Gubernatora i Komandira byvshago Otdel'nago Finliandskago Korpusa General-ot-Infanterii Grafa Zakrevskago 16. III 1824_26. IX 1831.

7 Line regiments were special troops for defending border regions of the empire; in 1850 they held their 150th jubilee and received new colours. RGVIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 245 Delo o nagrazhdenii novymi znamenami 2., 5

8 Otchet o voennom upravlenii Finliandskago general gubernatora i komandira byvshago otdel'nago Finliandskago korpusa general ot infanterii Grafa Zakrevskago 16. III 1824_26. IX 1831.

three years of active service in Finland, and were then replaced with another regiment after its long march from the Don.

With a law-abiding and loyal population, the Cossacks were seldom needed for police tasks, but they were there as the last resort of the authorities. Seven unruly and loutish brothers, the principal characters in the first Finnish novel, were threatened: "The vicar has discussed you with the bishop, who will ask for fifty Cossacks for our parish [...] what a shame! Military force into our parish because of seven men!"⁹

The reduction of the Imperial army also caused a renumbering of the division in Finland. In the main armies in the European part of the Empire, there had been twenty-two divisions and thus the division in Finland, the last one in order, had been number twenty-three, but after the reduction of the main army to eighteen divisions the Finnish one was the 19th, and then along with further reorganizations the 20th, 21st, and finally the 22nd in 1845. This renumbering has caused historians no end of confusion; they supposed that the division was frequently changed because Finnish-born officers tended to gather in the division which was stationed in the country of their origin. But the eminent military historian J.E.O. Screen remarked, and Pertti Alanen definitely showed, that it was the same division in Finland all the time, although numbered differently and called infantry, jäger, or line troops.

The division was quartered in numerous towns and villages, and it has not been possible to identify all the localities where they were billeted, but only the locality where the battalion headquarters staffs took the oath to the new Emperor in 1825 from their soldiers. Of the *Vyborgskii* regiment, two battalion staffs were in Viipuri and one battalion at Käkisalmi; the battalion staffs of the *Neishlottskii* regiment were at Kymenkartano (Kymmenegård), Ruotsinsalmi (Svensksund) and Hamina; the *Petrovskii* regiment at Helsinki, Sveaborg and Hanko; of the *Vilmanstrandskii* regiment there were two battalions at Loviisa and one at Hamina; the 45th Regiment staff was at Vaasa, and the 46th Regiment in Turku, on Åland, and at Hämeenlinna. After the reorganization the *Vyborgskii* line regiment was at Lapua (Lappo), Uusikaarlepyy (Nykarleby), Hämeenlinna and Vaasa, the *Petrovskii* regiment at Rauma (Raumo), Turku and

9 Kivi, *Seitsemän veljestä*, (The seven brothers), p. 455.

Tammisaari (Ekenäs), the *Neishlottskii* jäger regiment at Käkisalmi and Viipuri, and the *Vil'manstrandskii* jäger regiment at Loviisa, Ruotsinsalmi, and Hämeenlinna; some troops were temporarily quartered in Helsinki, at Hamina, and at Sveaborg, or were sometimes detached to guard the Kronstadt fortress for a while.

The main reason for choosing the locations for the troops in Finland seems to have been the demand for strategic preparedness in case of enemy attack from the Baltic Sea, as was previously the case. A secondary consideration was garrisoning the country in order to maintain Imperial power and prestige there.¹⁰ Finding satisfactory quarters must also have been a factor which led to the scattering of troops at distances from each other, before barracks were constructed over many decades for the different troops. Officers were quartered in the garrison towns by the local authorities, and the costs were paid by the Finnish Senate.¹¹

Military commandants were appointed to keep an eye on military administration, stores and establishments in various localities, 2nd class commandants in Viipuri and Sveaborg, 3rd class at Hamina, in Helsinki, in Turku, on Åland, 4th class at Savonlinna, Hanko, Svärtholma and Loviisa, Ruotsinsalmi, 5th class *platsmaiors*¹² at Tornio (Torneå), Vaasa, Hämeenlinna, Kyminkartano, Lappeenranta, and Käkisalmi. Invalid detachments guarded stores at Hämeenlinna,

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10 "The people showed unswerving loyalty towards the government and were of exemplary honesty; among the gentry there were ambitious and self-serving individuals, who engrossed the administrative offices of the country for their personal interest, but Count Zakrevskii soon put an end to that", according to the report of Prince Menschikoff. RGAVMF, fond 19, opis' 4, delo 429, p. 34: Istoricheskaia svedeniia, Vzgliaid na Finliandiiu v 1832 g.

11 Officers were entitled to living quarters with a kitchen and a servants' room according to their rank:

General	9	rooms and stabling for 5 horses
Lieutenant General	7	4
Major General	6	3
Colonel and Major	3	1
Captain	2-3	
Lieutenant	1-2	

RGVIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 485 Shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennyh. Proekt po vozobnovliiaemu ustavu o postoinoi povinnosti v Finliandii, po kotorym otlozhenno ispolnenie, po prikazaniu Ego Svetlost', do udobneishago vremeni, s tem, chtoby delo sie khranili v Arkhive shtaba vpred do vostrebovaniia, predlozhenie Senata 14/26.V 1836 – The Finnish Senate tried in vain to reduce the number of rooms by one for each rank.

12 *platsmaior* indicates the lowest rank of a local commandant.

Helsinki, Hamina, Käkisalmi, Lappeenranta, Savonlinna, Sortavala, Turku, Viipuri, and Åland.

One battalion of garrison troops was stationed in Viipuri and at Kuopio, later transferred to Sveaborg, and there was one additional battalion on Åland.

In the 1830s, there were in all perhaps two or three thousand men of these local, i.e. non-operational troops.

Artillery garrisons in Viipuri, at Savonlinna, Ruotsinsalmi, Hamina, on Åland, at Sveaborg, Hanko, and Svartholma probably consisted of a couple of thousand men in all. At Savonlinna, for example, the garrison consisted of 84 men plus one company of the Viipuri fortress infantry, with 48 cannons and 12 mortars, until the fort was abandoned in 1835.¹³ In addition there were engineer troops, labour troops, and penal companies, in all twelve or fourteen hundred men, and about one hundred men in the gendarmerie or uniformed political police detachment.¹⁴ In 1847 there were 9,599 men on the rolls of the 22nd Division (nominal strength 12,772), 1,327 in the fortresses, 819 Cossacks, and finally 624 men in the engineer penal company¹⁵ – probably constructing fortresses.

Ethnic Finnish troops

The battalion headquarters staffs of the two Finnish infantry regiments and one jäger regiment were still located in Turku, at Vaasa, Hämeenlinna, Heinola, in Viipuri and at Kuopio, and the training battalion in Helsinki. Sometimes these troops were called the operative army of Finland, at other times the Finnish Division, or simply the Finnish troops.

The staffs of the Finnish regiments were dissolved in 1826 and their commanders appointed brigade commanders instead. Recruitment in the battalions was ordered to cease in 1827 until their numbers were reduced to four hundred men each and they were transformed into rifle or sharpshooter battalions, a new version of light infantry.

13 "Neishlott", *Voennaia Entsyklopediia*, vol. XVI, pp. 580–581.

14 This chapter is based on Pertti Alanen's unpublished study in the University of Tampere: *Venäläiset maavoimat Suomessa Nikolai I:n aikana* (The Russian army in Finland during the time of Nicholas I)

15 RGAVMF, fond 19, opis' 4, delo 400 'Voiska Finliandskiia', Chislennoe sostoianie voisk v Finliandii razpolozhennykh, January 1847, p. 4.

"Captain Karl Andreevich Hallberg" (of the Finnish Naval Equipage). The naval battalion was recruited from among Finnish fishermen and seafarers, was quartered in barracks in Helsinki in wintertime, and served in the Imperial Baltic Fleet in summertime. In the picture, Captain Hallberg leans on a heavy breach-loading naval gun, in a ship powered by sail.

Photo: Museovirasto Neg 76718.



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Instead of having Swedish as the language of command, they started to be commanded in Russian in 1828.¹⁶

In the papers of the Main Staff in St Petersburg the name "General Staff of the Finnish Army" was sometimes mentioned, due to a misunderstanding in 1817 when the uniform for the officer dealing with Finnish Affairs in the Main Staff was prescribed. The grandiloquent name was abolished in 1826 by a special order.¹⁷

In 1830 the Finnish troops were dissolved, as was also the Finnish war commissariat and the military court of appeal. In that year, the separate Polish army took part in the rebellion against Russia, but it seems that military and fiscal reasons were a more important reason for the reduction of the Finnish units than any suspicion of disloyalty.

16 RGVIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 573 o finskikh voisk, Nikolai I , 2. V 1827, "My priznali za blago..."

17 RGVIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 573 o finskikh voisk, Sravnenie vremennago shtata Finskikh Voisk i sostavlennye vnov... 5. XII 1826.

Zakrevskii, who had been appointed Minister of the Interior, returned to Finland ostensibly to prevent cholera from spreading there (which he was unable to do), but, in fact, to investigate the rumoured smuggling of weapons for revolutionaries, which rumour he, a most suspicious and particular martinet, found to be completely false.¹⁸

In place of the disbanded troops, a naval equipage or battalion of five hundred men (to be doubled in time of war) was established in 1830 to train sailors. Zakrevskii reasoned that the population was skilful in seafaring, sailing, and shipwrighting, and that it was in the Imperial interest to take advantage of this fact. Finns had served in the Swedish navy, and now they could be useful for the imperial fleet under Russian officers. The Finnish sailors were recruited by enlistment for six years. Finnish-born officers from Russia and Finland were transferred to the equipage under the command of Lieutenant Commander Nikolai Possiet, and bosuns, helmsmen and other competent men from the Finnish merchant fleet were encouraged to enlist as non-commissioned officers.¹⁹

The Finnish Senate expressed its heartfelt gratitude for the planned creation of a naval service in the form of the training battalion. It was, the Senate said, necessary in the new political position of the country, as well as natural and important for the protection of its coasts and navigation.²⁰

In fact, no Finnish navy or coastal defence had been created. The equipage of five hundred men²¹ was quartered first at Sveaborg, then from 1832 in its barracks in Helsinki during the winter season. In the summer sailing period, it manned ships of the Russian Baltic fleet. The first time the equipage manned three ships of its own was in 1842, one of them the *Leipzig*, a ship of the line of 74 guns. Sometimes the Finns even served aboard a ship which carried a name recalling their home country, e.g. the *Finland* in 1850 or the *Kalevala* in 1859.²²

18 "Zakrevskii, A.A", *Russkii biograficheskii slovar'*, vol. XXIII, pp. 196–99.

19 RGAVMF, fond 19, opis' 4, delo 428, Proekt o finskoi ekipazhe, Vysochaishe Ego Imperatorskoe Velichestva obiaвление ob uprazhnenii dvukh Finskikh strelkovykh batalionov i sformirovanii v Finliandii Morskago Ekipazha pod nazyvaniem Pervago Finskago, 21. V 1831.

20 Cited by K. W. R(auhala), "Zakrevski", *Kansallinen elämäkerrasto*, vol. V, p. 700.

21 In 1847 there were 506 men present, 24 in hospital, and 126 detached elsewhere. RGAVMF, fond 19, delo 400, p. 4, chislitel'noe sostoianie voisk v Finliandii razpolozhennykh.

22 At other times these ships were manned by Russians, see: RGAVMF, fond 1304,



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"Company Commander Baron Aleksander Wrede receiving a report". A copy of a drawing by Hugo Backmansson, who, in numerous drawings, illustrated the everyday life of the Hamina Cadet School.

Photo: Suomen kansallismuseo Km inv. no 38019:9.

A second naval battalion was established during the Crimean War, but it was disbanded in 1856. The first equipage was reduced to a cadre company of 131 men in 1862, but it continued to exist until 1880.²³

opis' 1, delo 1, Prikazy komandira vintovago korveta Kalevala s 1864 i 1865 goda.

23 Pikoff, "Landsmän...", p. 45; Manninen, J., "Suomen laivasto"(The Finnish Navy).

All this time, the Hamina Cadet School existed without interruption. It worked according to the Russian regulations of 1831 and 1845, and under the Imperial Inspector of Military Schools from 1836, teaching 120 boys. Part of the cost was paid by the Finnish Senate, increased to two thirds in 1863 and even more in 1888. Only people living under the Finnish laws and administration, in course of time defined as Finnish citizens, were admitted to the corps.

General Manderstierna, the commander of the division in Finland in the 1840s, proposed establishing a yunker school for Finns to study Russian language and military knowledge and thereby to help them gain admittance into the Imperial army. The school was founded by Imperial order, paid for by the Finnish Senate, and started teaching in 1846. At first it worked under the divisional commander, then after 1861 under the staff of the Russian troops in Finland. The school initially admitted sixty students, later one hundred, and two hundred in 1872, also Russians among them, usually sons of officers of the division stationed in Finland. The school in Helsinki was modelled after the yunker schools in Russia. The school was closed down in 1880, because it did not fit in well with the scheme planned for a new Finnish national service army, also because the Ministry of War did not want to pay for any changes, and finally because the Finnish Senate wanted the school building for their own needs.²⁴

Of the enlisted Finnish military forces established in 1812, only the training battalion remained after 1830, and, in contrast to the other battalions, it was destined to have a long history till 1905. It was very well trained, though mainly on the parade ground, of course. Line tactics had been made obsolete by the end of the eighteenth century by tactical and technical development, but most armies maintained the aesthetically satisfying formations. In 1829, the march-past of the Finnish battalion at the Tsarskoe Selo military camp so impressed Emperor Nicholas that he exclaimed "there is my guard!". Colonel Anders Edvard Ramsay, the Finnish commander of the battalion and a favourite of the Emperor, took him at his word and had the battalion

pp. 58–61, 74; Mattila, "Suomen laivastovoimien vaiheita ennen itsenäisyyden aikaa" (Finnish Naval Forces Before Independence), pp. 33–42. The equipage was part of the Imperial Baltic fleet, and calling it a national Finnish navy, as Mattila and J. Manninen do, is clearly anachronistic.

24 Screen, "Venäläiset sotaoppilaitokset Suomessa"; Screen, *The Helsinki Yunker School 1846–1879*.



69

"Imperial Guards; the Finnish Rifle Battalion; a lithograph." The Guards were the elite troops of the Imperial army, proud of their privileges, but trained and equipped for parades rather than for battles. The picture belongs to a series showing the uniforms of various Russian units. The uniform of each regiment or detached battalion varied in their details, although the general design resembled the Prussian model.

transformed into the "Finnish Third Rifle Battalion of the Imperial Life Guards", with the privileges of the Russian junior guards regiments. In Finland, it was usually called simply the Guards Battalion. The anti-Finnish historian Borodkin says a bit sourly "its first military laurels the Finnish battalion earned not in battle but on

parade".²⁵

But the following year the Guards Battalion "already fought for, and proved the Finnish loyalty towards, their Monarch", in the words of the Governor-General.²⁶ When the Poles rose in rebellion in 1830, the Finnish battalion was ordered to take part in putting down the rebels. The marching order called forth "stormy joy" in the words of one of Zakrevski's aides. Finns, in general, were loyal to their Emperor and could only comprehend that the Poles were out of their minds.²⁷ The battalion and its commander earned the Emperor's gratitude for the pacification of Poland. It is not known how many Poles the battalion managed to kill, but of the 740 soldiers who marched to war in January 1831, and of 145 reservists sent to reinforce them, only eighty-two, decorated with St George crosses, *Virtuti Militari* medals, or medals for the conquest of Warsaw, took part in the victory parade in Helsinki. Of the rest, it was said that more than three hundred died of sickness or in battle, and those who survived were permanently invalided from frost-bite and many other causes.²⁸

Again, in 1848–49, the Guards Battalion proved Finnish loyalty to the Empire: they started marching to Hungary to participate in putting down the republican rebels, but cholera stopped them at Riga and Brest-Litovsk.²⁹

In 1838 a project for re-establishing the *indelta* troops was planned by the Staff of the Troops in Finland, but was not accepted in St Petersburg.³⁰ Instead, it was planned to improve the defences of the Empire in the Grand Duchy by enlisting four rifle or sharpshooter battalions. But only one grenadier battalion was formed in 1846, consisting of four companies of 250 men each at war-time strength.

25 Borodkin, *Finskiia voiska pri Imperatore Nikolae I*, p. 145.

26 Materialy i cherty k biografii Imperatora Nikolaia I i k istorii ego tsarstvovaniia; kratkii ocherk po tsarstvo Polskomu, raport Rizhskago voennago, Lifliandskago, Estlandskago i Kurliandskago general-gubernatora, ocherk Finliandii 1825–1850 gg. Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv SSSR, fond 728/ Microfilm NL 171, National Archives of Finland, p. 184.

27 Pohjolan-Pirhonen, *Kansakunta löytää itsensä 1808–1855*, pp. 461–62.

28 Schauman, *Kuudelta vuosikymmeneltä*, vol. 1, p. 110.

29 Gripenberg, G.A., "Suomen kaarti" (The Finnish Guards). *Oma maa*, vol. VI, pp. 895–902.

30 RGVIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 485 shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh, proekt po vozobnovliaemu ustavu o postoinoi povinnosti v Finliandii, po kotorym otlozheni ispolnenie, po prikazaniiu Ego Velitshestvom, do udobneishago vremeni, s tem shtoby delo sie khranili v Arkhive Shtaba vpred do vstrebovaniu.

Ramsay had been appointed inspector of Russian rifle troops in 1838, and under his command, too, Russian grenadiers were trained in Finland and then sent to their permanent garrisons in the various corps in Russia, in all nine battalions in succession. After the Crimean War, Ramsay was appointed Commander of the Imperial Grenadier Corps, promoted general in 1859, and in 1867 second-in-command of the Warsaw military district.³¹ The Finnish grenadier battalion was transformed in 1856 into a training battalion and garrisoned at Hämeenlinna, and disbanded in 1860.

The troops recruited in Finland and paid for by the Finnish Senate were ethnically Finnish, but they were organic parts of the Imperial army. At least among the officers, no national separatism existed, as the example of Ramsay shows. The idea of fighting for the Emperor was not alien to the Finns; Iiro Hakkri, a sailor character from Rauma in a short story, was recruited for the Imperial army when drunk, and was quite eager for military service and the consequent glory and chance of causing destruction: "goddam how I'll lay waste everything but dear old Rauma".³² While the eighteenth century had known that war was destructive, the romantic nineteenth century idealized war, and regarded permanent peace as incompatible with the laws of history. For example, the national Finnish poet, Johan Ludvig Runeberg, extolled military heroism and self-sacrifice.³³

31 Anders Edvard Ramsay, born at Kuopio 1799, served in the Corps of Pages in St Petersburg, won the trust of Nicholas I in quelling the conspiracy of December 1825, chief of the Finnish training battalion in 1827, led the Guards Battalion in Poland in 1830–31, studied rifle troops in Berlin, chief of the Naval Equipage in 1830, Major General in 1836, inspector of imperial rifle troops in 1838, Lieutenant General and inspector of Finnish troops in 1847. Ramsay, of Scottish origins, whose forefathers were in Swedish service, was born in Finland, had a career in the Empire, and is a good example of the fact that it is futile to try to define the ethnicity of the nineteenth-century aristocracy.

Alanen specially underlines the organic unity of Finnish troops with the Imperial army during Nicholas I's time, p. 79.

32 Nortamo, "Hakkri Iiro otta sotamiähem besti", *Nortamon kootut teokset*, vol. IV, p. 146. (The story of a sailor recruited into the army).

33 Forsman, *Fredrik Cygnaeus kirjailijana ja ajanilmiönä*, pp. 103–30.

Coastal defence

72

The establishment of the naval equipage in 1830 was part of the strengthening of the coastal defence of Russia in the Baltic region. The international prestige of the Empire stood high after 1815, but its very might also provoked fear and jealousy in other countries. For Palmerston in London, Russia seemed threatening on many frontiers: from Finland, her arm reached towards the northern Atlantic, her successful war against Turkey in 1827–29 was not believed to be so much in aid of the Orthodox peoples in the Balkans as an advance towards a power position in the Mediterranean and the Near East, and the war against Persia and the conquest of Caucasia brought Russia uncomfortably close to India. As seen from St Petersburg, the Western Powers were scheming against vital Russian interests while suborning rebellion in the Netherlands, in France, in Caucasia, and, worst of all, in Poland. To protect his northern flank, Nicholas proposed closing the Baltic Sea to Denmark and Sweden, but these countries did not wish to provoke the Western Powers with such measures.

Admiral Lazarev tried to improve the Russian Black Sea fleet and had some success, while ships were constructed in the Baltic, too. However, the construction work proceeded slowly, ships made of unseasoned fir were apt to rot rather rapidly, and the naval administration was one of the most corrupt among the Russian offices.³⁴

In order to improve the defences against the Western menace, fortifications were constructed or improved in Warsaw–Novogeorgievsk–Ivangorod, Brest, Grodno, Rovno, and Dubno.³⁵ On the Baltic coast Dünamunde and Kronstadt were reinforced, as were the fortifications on the Finnish side, in Viipuri, at Svartholma, at Sveaborg, and at Hanko. Archangel with its shipyards on the White Sea was the northernmost point in the chain of strongpoints.

Sveaborg served as a naval base and naval fortress,³⁶ and Viipuri was a second-class fortress. Käkisalmi and Savonlinna, the ancient forts on the Russo-Swedish border in the interior, were decommis-

34 See: Daly, *Russian Seapower and the Eastern Question 1827–41*, passim.

35 Iakovlev, *Istoriia krepostei*, pp. 106–10.

36 RGAVMF, fond 326, opis' 1, delo 12313, Generalnyi plan Sveaborgskago porta s pokazaniem na onom rabot proizvedennykh v 1833 godu. Sostavlenn 26go Maia 1834 goda.

sioned in 1810 and 1835 because they had lost their strategic importance with the annexation of all Finland by Russia. The small forts at Hamina and Svartholma were also taken out of service in 1835 and 1851. Only Hanko and 'Fort Slava' at Ruotsinsalmi remained as third-class forts.

A new fortress of the second class, i.e. quite an important one, was to be established on Åland at Bomarsund. The site was chosen in 1825; three years later military engineers received the order to start planning the fort, while construction work started in 1829. The fortress ought to have been completed in five years. Bomarsund was chosen for a base because the waters around it were navigable, i.e. free from ice, from the very beginning of the sailing season. The fleet at Sveaborg and Reval, not to speak of Kronstadt, stayed ice-bound many weeks longer.³⁷

These measures for improved defence did not imply any offensive plans. Financially and materially, Russia was in no position to attack modern Great Powers. "The extreme slowness of the construction of Bomarsund" was noted and in 1854 only one fifth of the fortress, i.e. three towers and a barrack for 2,500 men, had been completed.³⁸

Barracks continued to be constructed for garrisons on the mainland, too, but it was only under Alexander II that all troops in Finland were living in government quarters. The Russian army had difficulties in finding quarters for its masses, of which as late as 1871 more than one third (42%) were billeted in peasant homes. An extraordinary effort in the ethnically non-Russian border regions was necessary to construct permanent barracks for the army, so as to avoid conflicts with the local populations, difficulties in training, and maintaining discipline.³⁹

The Finnish administration paid pensions to the former Finnish officers in the old Swedish army and their families, and the Russian army needed housing and transport, which was arranged by the local districts and paid for by the Finnish Senate. This military expenditure caused difficulties, especially in 1830–31, when the Guards Battalion was campaigning in Poland and the fortress of Bomarsund was being constructed. The first public debt of the Finnish state was contracted

37 RGAVMF, fond 19, opis' 4, delo 427 o Ålandskikh ukrepleniakh 1832–1841.

38 "Bomarsund". *Voennaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. IV, p. 639.

39 Bogdanovich, *Istoricheskii ocherk deiatel'nosti voennago upravleniia v Rossii...*, vol. IV, p. 87, annex 61.

then. On the other hand, the Russian army brought money from the Imperial treasury and spent it in Finland on its provisions. In all, the financial burden caused by the military was much lighter than during the Swedish time.⁴⁰ Of even more importance, but difficult to estimate in money, was the fact that Finland was protected by the mighty Empire, while, on the other hand, Russia's distant conflicts could provoke war even on Finnish coasts, as was to be seen before long.

In 1828–32, the efforts of Russia to improve her defences, together with the Polish rebellion, the Persian war, intervention in Greece, and the Straits question, caused much apprehension in the West and almost a naval scare in England. Of course, the fact that the measures were defensive and that no offensive plans existed did not exclude the possibility of a future advance if the opposition should prove weak enough. Russia's advance in Asia, the great game against the English, went on from step to step, without any grand plan. But no chance of easy conquest turned up in the north after 1809.

The first twenty-five years of Nicholas I's reign were a peaceful time for Finland, without problems in defence or in keeping order. The Emperor was no friend of constitutions, but he was satisfied that the non-intervention of Russian ministers in Finnish affairs guaranteed political peace in the country, and letting the Finnish bureaucrats enjoy their high salaries without Russian competition was in itself a constitutional way of administering the border country, in the view of its inhabitants. The economy of Finland grew, even if very slowly at first. New ideas of nationhood, the national state, and constitutional procedure were cautiously discussed in a few closed circles, without much political seriousness. Russian elites rather favoured romantic Finnish national ideas, with the purpose of making Finns forget their Swedish past and Western orientation. But too much spontaneous

40 Myllyntaus, "Suomen talouspolitiikka ja valtiotalous 1809-1860", *Suomen taloushistoria*, vol. I, pp. 362-63. (The Finnish public finances 1809-1860). The Finnish military revenue, collected instead of the *indelta* service, amounted to 326,717 roubles in 1849, while the Finnish troops caused an expenditure of 289,179 roubles, the salary and pensions for the officers dismissed in 1809 and 1830 amounted to 24,331 and 8,840 roubles, the cadet corps 39,311 roubles and the pilot, lighthouse, local commandant and other non-combatant establishments cost 132,051, in all 493,614 roubles, thus leaving the difference of 166,997 roubles to be paid from other, civilian, revenues. The Imperial treasury paid for the Russian troops. RGAVMF, fond 19, opis' 4, delo 400, Voiska Finliandskii, Sravnitelnaia tablitsa, pokazavaiushchaia dokhody i rashkody po militsionnomu vedomstvu Finliandii, p. 115.

popular activity was frowned upon, for instance religious evangelicalism or secular literature written in Finnish.

In the revolutionary year 1848 the flotilla in Sveaborg was ordered to bombard Helsinki in case of disorders breaking out there,⁴¹ but no reason for any repressive measures emerged.

Nicholas had reason to be satisfied with the policy of pacification which he and his brother Alexander had carried out in Finland. In the report on his 25-five year reign Nicholas proudly wrote on the margin of the chapter dealing with the Grand Duchy: See here my account for Finland!⁴²

THE TEST AND THE PROOF

75

The Near Eastern Question proves difficult to deal with

It seems that, the years 1828–32 excepted, there was no serious threat to Russian security on the Baltic Sea after the Napoleonic Wars. At least the extreme lack of urgency in the construction of Bomarsund and the neglect of other coastal fortifications indicates that Prince Menschikoff, the Imperial Minister of the Navy and Governor-General of Finland, did not regard the situation as dangerous.

It was a world-wide conflict and a distant battle that brought war to the Baltic coasts and made necessary the reinforcement coastal defences; and, once again, brought forth the question of Finland's political position.

Nicholas I did not intend to start the war that was to be called the Crimean War;⁴³ he only wanted to revive his right to protect the Orthodox subjects of the Sultan. The claim was based on the treaties

41 Borodkin, *Voina 1854–1855 gg na Finskom poberezh'e; Istoricheskii ocherk*, p. 54.

42 'Vot tebe moi otchet po Finliandii'. (note in the Emperor's own hand on the margin) *Materialy i cherty k biografii Imperatora Nikolaia i k istorii ego tsarsstvovaniiu*. Tsentralnyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv SSSR, fond 728/ Microfilm NL 171, National Archives of Finland, p. 165.

43 A good, even if rather detailed, introduction to the theme is: Goldfrank, *The Origins of the Crimean War*; also Saab, *The Origins of the Crimean Alliance*, is a useful book.

his grandmother, Catherine II, had made with the Porte in 1774 and 1791. The treaties were far from clearly worded; perhaps Russia had been given the right to supervise one church in Constantinople only, but the Emperor thought that the treaties covered all Christians in Turkey. Of course, the Turks had no wish to consent to the Russian demands, and were supported by the Western Powers who realized that Russia might have under her protection one third of the Sultan's subjects. Because of the Turkish system of self-government of the various religious communities, their protection would have meant political domination, too. Nicholas had already, in 1830, established his protection over the Turkish Straits, which the other Powers, only after much trouble, had succeeded in making harmless in 1840. Now the Russian Emperor seemed again to be attempting to subjugate the Near East.

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Nicholas's proposal for dividing the inheritance of the Turkish Empire between the Powers in case the Sick Man of Europe should die, even if earnestly meant only as a precaution, appeared only too menacing to Western eyes when he backed up his demands on the Turks by a military occupation of the Danubian Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. The destruction of a Turkish flotilla at Sinope in 1853 and the inept bullying in Constantinople by the Emperor's envoy Menschikoff⁴⁴ made the threat seem only too serious.

The British Prime Minister Aberdeen was a cautious man, but he was swept aside in an anti-Russian wave of feeling headed by Palmerston. In Paris, Napoleon III was ready to resort to any chance of securing his recently-won throne by a successful foreign policy. His aim was to break the ring of Great Powers which had isolated France since the fall of his namesake in 1815. This aim did not conflict with the reassertion of the interests of his country in the Levant. A Russo-British conflict was very welcome to him.

Polish refugees from the rebellion of 1830-31 and Hungarian emigrés from the massacre of 1849 did their best to blacken the image of Nicholas, the gendarme of Europe, and they found an eager audience in the Western public. For once, the Turk was the underdog, and Russia was the despotic, oriental, backward country that deserved to be held in check by progressive, enlightened and imperialistic Western powers.

44 The very same Menschikoff who was Governor-General of Finland.

Austria, Russia's conservative ally and one-time companion-in-arms against the Turks, did not like the Russian advance over the Danube towards the Balkan peninsula. As the price of her neutrality, Austria demanded the evacuation of the principalities by the Russians. Nicholas I complied, with bitter feelings. But the West was not pleased with Austria, either, for it was felt that Austria had anyway left the anti-Russian alliance. Austria did not take any active part in the ensuing war, but lost in prestige and good-will, a loss which was felt for a long time afterwards.

Prussia was the sole Power to retain some goodwill towards Russia.

In the West, Palmerston and other rabid anti-Russians set as the aim of their policy the weakening of this over-blown Eastern Empire. No fixed plan was made, but the most extreme measure might have been to dismember Russia by cutting off the areas conquered by Catherine II and Alexander I, either to be made independent or given back to their previous owners. Thus Russia would have lost Crimea and 'New Russia' on the southern steppes, as well as Poland and the recent conquests in the Caucasus. In the north, Finland might have been separated from Russia and given back to Sweden.⁴⁵

77

In Stockholm, people were of two minds as to whether to continue Karl Johan's cautious policy of 1812. Conservatives saw Russia as a pillar of the social order, but in Sweden there was also a growing liberal opinion for whom the Tsar was the arch-reactionary. Then, there were the Scandinavian idealists who dreamed of a Swedish-Danish-Norwegian Union. A few of them thought, too, that Sweden was still responsible for safeguarding the inheritance she had left in Finland, i.e. Western culture, the Swedish language, and liberal political institutions. In these circles, emigrés from Finland were among the most eager, e.g. Emil von Qvanten, who dreamed of a Scandinavia which reached from the North Sea to the White Sea and Lake Onega.

King Oscar I (1844–57) was, in fact, inclined to take a forward policy, in sympathy with liberal opinion, in order to enhance his prestige and strengthen his position; but only if it could be done without any risk. As a precondition for joining the war, he demanded unconditional support from the West and Austrian participation in the

45 Maude, *Finland and Britain 1854–1914*, p. 29: "These schemes should be regarded as thoughts on the possibilities that the fortunes of war or the negotiations of peace-table might provide".

war. This would have meant more of a burden than help to the Western Powers, whose main force was directed towards the Crimea and who could only send a fraction of their military and naval power to the Baltic Sea. Nor could they make Austria join the war. In the end, caution won and Sweden did not declare war on Russia. She only allowed the Allied fleet to use anchorages on her coasts. The treaty of Sweden-Norway with England and France, which was not signed until November 1855, bound Sweden-Norway only to maintain its territorial integrity, which the Western Powers in turn guaranteed. In practice this meant that Russian or Finnish Lapps were not allowed to herd their reindeer on the Norwegian fells, so as not to cover a clandestine Russian advance to the Atlantic coast. The treaty freed the British from the apprehension that the Russians were reaching out for a naval base on the Norwegian coast, which, in fact, had never been in the Russian plans.

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The principal effort of the West was directed to the Crimea. The Russian Black Sea fleet was captured or sunk. The war was reduced to a siege of Sevastopol, the principal Russian naval base on the Black Sea, starting from September 1854 with British, French, and Turkish troops, and with the Sardinians joining in January 1855. The city was not totally encircled, which in fact meant that Russia was able to send reinforcements to the fortress, although not as many as the Allied were able to transport on their ships to their assault forces. The agrarian Empire, with serf soldiers, without good roads, with supplies carried on horse-carts, with a corrupt and inept organization, was not able to compete with the industrialized naval Powers, even when their military organization was far from faultless and their steam-powered machinery still rather primitive. Thus, during the eleven months of the siege Russia was bled white of soldiers and money, with internal social and political discontent taking ever more threatening forms. The final fall of Sevastopol on 18 September 1855 was no definite military catastrophe, but by then Russia was ready to submit to the dictate of the Western Powers.⁴⁶

46 Curtiss, *Russia's Crimean War*; Treue, *Der Krimkrieg und seine Bedeutung für die modernen Flotten*.

The British Royal and French Imperial Navies in the Baltic Sea

The main effort against Russia was directed to the south, but the Baltic Sea also served as a theatre of war, because the allies wanted to bind Sweden to their side and harass Russia so as to prevent her from concentrating her forces in the Crimea.

The Baltic Sea had been a traditional theatre of war for the Royal Navy since the days of Peter the Great. Many British naval officers had taught their Russian colleagues the art of naval war; at times, the British had fought against the Russians, at other times together with them against common enemies. They also had supported the Russian Mediterranean flotilla against the Turks in the 1770s and against Napoleon. The occasional Russian attempts to close the Baltic Sea to outside Powers, in practice meaning the British, had not had any success. During the Napoleonic wars, the Royal Navy had not shrunk from violent measures against the Danes in order to keep access to the Baltic Sea open.

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Thus it was natural that in the war against Russia, a naval force was sent to the Baltic in 1854, in all eighty ships with 43,000 men and 3,652 guns. The British weighed anchor in March 1854, under the command of Admiral Sir Charles Napier, soon to be joined by a French squadron under Vice-Admiral Perceval-Deschênes. Both admirals are usually dismissed as elderly gentlemen without much noticeable energy or any clear idea of what they were going to do, but in fact they did exactly what they were ordered to do. The Admiralty wrote to Napier that because the enemy was not inclined to avail himself of the opportunity offered to him of battle, the Admiral was to seek for other points where the enemy might be more vulnerable, and to cause him all the annoyance possible upon his own shores. The Russian fleet was known to consist of twenty-two ships of the line, and while carrying out other tasks, the Admiral had always to keep at hand a sufficient force to hold this fleet in check. Napier was to establish a strict blockade of the Gulf of Finland and the Gulf of Bothnia, and the great objective was to render the enemy fleet useless by confining it to its moorings.⁴⁷

The Russians did keep their ships behind the walls of Sveaborg

47 Admiralty to Napier 7. III 1854, 5. IV 1854, 11. VII 1854. Adm 2 Sec Out letters, 102 Blockade, PRO.

and Kronstadt, so no great battle was to be fought. "The Russian [...] sailors, confined much of the year to the land, [were] lacking the necessary gunnery practice and even the elementary navigational skills", and there was to be no improvement up to the Japanese War 1904–05⁴⁸ and not much even in the First World War. The Allies dominated the sea in the north as they did in the south, and harassed Russian trade on the sea. Ships sailing under the Russian flag were mainly Finnish, and the Crimean War was a serious blow to the Finnish merchant fleet, which lost more than one-third of its tonnage, partly through the action of British frigates, mainly through the consequent panic sales. Luckily, the war-time prices for ships were rather high, which made reconstruction easier after the war,⁴⁹ but, nevertheless, the losses were long remembered in Finland, as will be shown later.

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An allied detachment under Admiral Plumridge sailed to the Gulf of Bothnia, where they burned naval stores at Oulu and Raahe (Brahestad). Part of the stores were British property, i.e. purchased and paid for by British businessmen, only waiting to be exported. On the other hand, a British raid on Kokkola (Gamlakarleby) failed, because the landing boats could not be supported by artillery fire from the ships on the narrow and shallow approach to the town. A small Russian detachment with local Finnish volunteers succeeded in fending off the attack and capturing one of the boats, which is still proudly exhibited in the Kokkola museum, and a Finnish seal hunter's portrait was painted and hung in the Imperial palace in Helsinki.⁵⁰

There was not much else the Allied navy could do in the absence of a naval enemy. There was a question in the British Parliament as to why Finns should be harassed if the Russian Emperor was the enemy. This was a time when the idea of protecting civilians from the terrors of war was being aired in Europe, and which led to various conventions to limit warfare. The questioners were perhaps more interested in causing a nuisance to the government than concerned about the native Finns.

48 Kennedy, *The rise and fall of British naval mastery*, pp. 210–11.

49 Kaukiainen, "Merenkulku". *Suomen taloushistoria*, vol. I, p. 458–74. (History of Finnish seafaring).

50 Klinge, *Kejsartiden*, p. 171. Nowadays, the former Imperial palace is the official residence of the President of the Finnish Republic, but the portrait is still to be seen there.



81

"An English boat surrendering at Kokkola in 1854". An insignificant loss for the British, but a cause of jubilation for the tiny town and its defenders. It was a sign of the success of the Imperial policy in Finland and made brothers-in-arms of the Russians and Finns.
Photo: Suomen kansallismuseo 4388:44.

Finns were subjects of the Russian Emperor in his quality of Grand Duke, and in international law Finns were Russians, legitimate objects of warfare. The admirals hardly knew the niceties of Finland's constitutional position in the Russian Empire, which was only slowly dawning on the Finns themselves. Killing Finns and stealing or destroying their property was sound military or naval strategy, because it also compelled the Emperor to defend his realm from attack on this side.⁵¹

51 Greenhill & Giffard, *The British Assault on Finland 1854–1855; A Forgotten Naval War*.

It is a very British point of view to call this war forgotten, but otherwise the authors discuss British naval policy in the Baltic region very well.

Preparations against the menace

As war seemed to be approaching, the Emperor at the end of 1853 appointed a committee to inspect the coastal fortifications in Finland. It was found that during the long peace the defences had been neglected and the works were badly dilapidated. In January 1854 the committee gave instructions to put the coastal forts into defensive condition. Viipuri, Fort Slava at Ruotsinsalmi, Svartholma, Gangut, Bomarsund, and, most important of all, Sveaborg, had to be armed and supplied with shot, powder, and all necessary material, and their garrisons brought up to wartime strength.⁵² Navigation lights on the coasts were put out, mines were laid in the passages to the harbours of Kronstadt, Reval, Dünamunde and Sveaborg.⁵³

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During the spring much work was done, but "because the works were very extensive and difficult"⁵⁴ there was "no hope that the fortresses could be ready for defence in the time laid down".⁵⁵ The fortifications received additional arms throughout the war years; previously, there had been 197 guns in all, but by the time the war ended the number had been increased to 689.⁵⁶

An optical telegraph was constructed along the coast to alert the defences when the enemy should approach. The navy soon replaced optical semaphores by an electric telegraph up to Kronstadt. The telegraph network was later extended to cover the whole of the Grand Duchy, and the system remained one of the few Russian institutions in the otherwise autonomous country.⁵⁷

The defence force was commanded by Platon Rokassovskii, the

52 O merakh k usileniiu oborone Vyborga, Svartgolmy, Ganguda, forte Slava, Sveaborga, i Alanda. Delo shtaba voisk, v Finliandii raspolozhennykh. Ven sot asiak 31, National Archives of Finland. Krenke, *Oborona Baltiiskago priberezhia v 1854-1856 godakh* is an informative book of memoirs by an engineer officer about the fortification of Kronstadt, Viipuri, Sveaborg and Turku.

53 The primitive mines were equally dangerous for defenders and eventual enemies, says M. Borodkin, *Voina 1854-1855 gg. na Finskom poberezh'e; Istoricheskie ocherk*, p. 62.

54 Commander of artillery to the acting Governor-General (Rokassovski) 18. III 1854. O merakh...

55 Report of the commandant of the Viipuri fortress 16. III 1854. O merakh... p. 34.

56 Seikari, "Suomen sotalaivos Venäjän sotilashallinnon osana 1800-luvulla", p. 101. (The Finnish military as part of the Russian military administration in the nineteenth century).

57 Nenonen, "Lennätinlaitos ja telefoni Suomessa" (Telegraph and telephone in Finland).



The defence of Finland in 1854-55

The permanent garrison of Finland was positioned along the coasts to fend off Allied landings, and the Grenadier division defended the most exposed coast between Hanko and Helsinki. The organization of the Finnish *indelta* troops was only completed after the war had ended.

Acting Governor-General. Menschikoff was rounding off his work as incompetent envoy to the Porte by conducting an unsuccessful defence of Sevastopol, where Nicholas had appointed him Commander-in-Chief.

In addition to the fortifications, there were the field or line troops in the Grand Duchy. The Ministry of War instructed Rokassovskii to position the battalions of the 22nd Division to guard the most important points on the coasts. Two line battalions (1st, 4th) were sent to Kronstadt, two to Viipuri, one (6th) to the region of Hamina and Ruotsinsalmi, one to Hanko (8th) and one to Bomarsund (10th). Three battalions joined the garrison of Sveaborg (2nd, 3rd, 5th) and the land front was secured by one battalion (11th) in Helsinki. Three battalions (7th, 9th, 12th) guarded Pohjanmaa, strengthened by three

field batteries and three Cossack *sotnii*.⁵⁸

One grenadier division with its sapper battalion and artillery brigade as well as several cavalry regiments were sent from Russia to reinforce the defence of Finland.⁵⁹ The Governor-General was instructed to post these troops close to the southern coast between Hanko and Helsinki.⁶⁰ The headquarters of this division was situated in Helsinki with the second brigade of three regiments, the battalions of which were to take up positions in the coastal parishes of Siuntio (Sjundeå), Karjaa (Karis), Espoo (Esbo), Kirkkonummi (Kyrkslätt) and Helsinki. The first brigade of two regiments, with its headquarters staff at Tammi-saari (Ekenäs), guarded the coastal parishes of Snappertuna, Lohja (Lojo), and Karjaa. The Grodno Hussars were garrisoned in Helsinki, and a detachment of guards cossacks at Nurmijärvi.⁶¹ One battery and one sapper company defended Turku.⁶²

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About forty small gun-boats were constructed at Turku, Helsinki and Pori, armed with 24-pound cannons, for a coastal flotilla. They were manned by sailors from the two Finnish naval battalions⁶³ and 840 additional sailors were transferred from the third fleet division at Sveaborg. The flotilla was commanded by Vice-Admiral Epantsin.⁶⁴

Rokassovskii was appointed Commander-in-Chief of all troops in Finland with the authority of the commander of a detached army corps. Lieutenant General Nordenstam (Governor of the province of Uusimaa, Vice-Chancellor of the University, who had served in the army in Caucasia) was appointed his chief of staff, and Ramsay was

58 RG VIA, Fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 283 shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh, Komanduiushchago voiskami v Finliandii raspolozhennykh raport Gospodinu Voennomu ministru 5/17. II. 1854. In Cossack cavalry, *sotnia* is the equivalent of squadron.

59 RG VIA, Fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 283 shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh. Shtab ego imperatorskago vyschestva Naslednika Tsesarevicha, Glavnokomanduiushchago gvardeiskimi i grenaderskimi korpusami 4.II.1854 Gospodine pomoshchniki General Gubernatora Finliandii.

60 Minister of War Dolgorukov to Rokassovski 1/13. III 1854. O razmeshchenii voisk v Finliandii v 1854 g dlia obshchei oboronu kraia, p. 1–14. Ven sot asiak 62, National Archives of Finland.

61 RG VIA, Fond 1019, opis 1, delo 283 shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh, Dislokatsiia li grenaderskoi divizii... s.d. (summer 1854).

62 RG VIA, Fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 283 shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh, Aboskago komendanta General-Leitenanta Derzhau raport 19.VIII 1854.

63 The naval equipages were easily recruited as many sailors were unemployed because of the enemy blockade.

64 RGAVMF fond 972, opis' 2, delo 30 o grebnoi flotilii v Finliandii 23. III/2. IV 1854 – 11. XII 1855.

to command the grenadiers to the west of Helsinki, supposedly the most exposed sector on the coast.

The fortress of Sveaborg was also under Rokassovskii's authority, under the direct command of Lieutenant General Sorokin.⁶⁵ Sorokin had much to do to put his defences in order.⁶⁶

Rokassovskii proposed posting the 22th Division on the southern coast, not close to the shore but at a certain distance and in detachments of two to three battalions, reinforced by artillery and Cossacks. Thus they would be ready to fend off small landings, each detachment in its sector, and to march to combine forces against a major landing, according to what the enemy might attempt. Rokassovski also demanded that one battalion be sent from Pohjanmaa to Hämeenlinna to guard the government archives, maps, and treasury, which were transferred there from the more exposed Helsinki, as well as the numerous prisoners in the ancient castle in the town.⁶⁷

Prince Dolgorukov, the Minister of War, stressed that only Helsinki and Viipuri were important enough to be defended in earnest, and reminded the Governor-General that the available forces must not be scattered. An advance guard could be stationed at Hanko and Tammisaari. Only one battalion could be stationed in Turku, and its main task would not so much be to defend the town as to stand prepared for an attack against the left flank of an eventual enemy landing on the southern coast of Finland. "In any case you must organize your troops so that you can defend Helsinki and Sveaborg to the last".⁶⁸

August Schauman, a Finnish memoir writer, described the arrival of the Russian reinforcements:

"First of all, Lieutenant General Gldenstbbe's 1st Grenadier

65 O podchinenii General-Leitenantu Rokasovskomu, vsekhn voisk, imeiushchikh pribyty' v Finliandiiu, na prave komandira otdelnago korpusa, naznacheniia v sii voiska nachalnika shtaba i usilenii v onom chisla chinov. RGVA, Fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 283 shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh.

66 There are innumerable accounts of the costs, none of which show clearly what exactly was done in 1854-55-56. RGVA, Fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 48, 49, 50, 51, 56, 57, smety, godovye otchety, shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh.

67 Governor-General to Minister of War 16/28. III 1854. O razmeshchenii voisk v Finliandii v 1854 g dlia obshchei oboronu kraia, p. 14. Ven sot asiak 62, National Archives of Finland.

68 Minister of War to the Governor-General 19. III 1854. O razmeshchenii voisk v Finliandii v 1854 g dlia obshchei oboronu kraia, p. 29. Ven sot asiak 62, National Archives of Finland.



"Grenadiers of the 1st Grenadier Division: an officer of the Regiment of the Prince of Prussia, a non-commissioned officer of the regiment of Prince Fredrik of the Netherlands, a private of the Samogitian Grenadiers, a drummer of the Grenadiers of Prince Barclay de Tolly." Regiments were numbered, but also known by the names of their honorary colonels, who were members of the domestic and foreign royalty or or of the aristocracy.
Photo: Timo Syrjänen 1992, Museovirasto Neg 202606.

Division had been ordered to defend Finland. His four beautiful regiments – the grenadiers of the King of Prussia, of Archduke Franz Charles, of Prince Fredric of the Netherlands, and the carabinieri of Prince Barclay de Tolly⁶⁹ – marched to Helsinki one after the other,

69 It was quite usual to identify regiments not by numbers but by their honorary

with a few days in between, in the middle of April... Soon after them we received the Grodno Hussar regiment with its graceful and epicurean officers. Cossack regiments, artillery batteries, sapper battalions and all kinds of troops then arrived... Forage, munitions, guns and other war materials were incessantly carried along the streets, giant amounts of hay were heaped up on the manoeuvre field, powder cellars and field bakeries were constructed..."⁷⁰

Viipuri belonged to the Grand Duchy and its administration was under the Governor-General, but its defence forces were under the "Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Guards and Grenadiers".⁷¹ Thus Viipuri was part of the inner defence circle of St Petersburg, while Rokassovskii commanded the outer or forward defence. The peace-time garrison of Viipuri consisted of a couple of fortress artillery companies which belonged to the 4th Garrison Artillery Brigade.⁷² For wartime defence, the garrison was reinforced by two reserve battalions of the grenadier division.⁷³

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On the opposite, southern, side of the Gulf of Finland, a Baltic army corps was organized to prevent the enemy from approaching the capital from the south-west. Under the command of General-of-Cavalry Siewers were two infantry divisions and one reserve division, reinforced with men from the *opolchenie*, i.e. replacement or militia troops composed of raw recruits; there were very few reservists in Russia, on permanent leave after surviving 15 years of active service. The infantry was supported by artillery, one cavalry division and one cavalry brigade, and in addition by the 44th Don Cossack regiment and the 1st Bashkir regiment.

Eventually the enemy carried out only one small landing on the coast of the Baltic provinces, which was easily fended off.⁷⁴

In the committee report or in the correspondence of the Minister of War with the Governor-General, only the stationing of troops in

Colonels, who were members of the Russian aristocracy or the reigning monarchs of friendly powers or members of their families.

70 Schauman, *Kuudelta vuosikymmeneltä*, vol. II, pp. 68–69. (memoirs of S.)

71 Minister of War to the Governor General 4. V 1854. O razmeshchenii voisk v Finliandii v 1854 g dlia obshchei oboronu kraia, p. 42. Ven sot asiak 62, National Archives of Finland.

72 "Vyborgskaia krepostnaia artilleriia", *Voennaia entsyklopediia*, vol. VII p. 98.

73 RGVA, Fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 313 shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh, O sformirovanii rezervnykh polkov dlia rezervnoi divizii Grenaderskogo Korpusa 20. II/3. III 1855.

74 "Baltiiskii korpus 1853–1856", *Voennaia Entsyklopediia*, vol. IV, p.

various localities was discussed. No plans for action were recorded, but from the positioning of the troops it is evident that the enemy was expected to come from the sea to attack the southern coast of Finland. Helsinki was to be defended because it was an important naval base and capital of the border country, while Viipuri belonged to the glacis of the Imperial capital and secured the communications between the troops in Finland with Russia.

The rather strong contingent in the surroundings of Vaasa, three battalions, three sotnias, and twelve guns, was evidently there to fend off an eventual Swedish landing. There was also another eventuality which had to be foreseen, because the region was inhabited by a Swedish-speaking population, but the Minister of War instructed the Governor-General: "you must not give the impression that the occupation indicates the government's distrust of the population, you must make it seem as if called forth by military considerations".⁷⁵

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The suspicion, if it did existed, was proved groundless, at least after the population saw that Russia's enemy was not Sweden but the Allied fleet which harassed their navigation, captured their ships, and destroyed coastal stores. Thus they took their hunting guns and joined the Russians in the coastal defence when possible.

The enemy also advanced to the mouth of the Gulf of Finland and made a landing at Hanko, fought off its defenders and destroyed the small fort at Tammissaari. The Finnish poet, journalist and historian Topelius reproached the progressive westerners for having joined the anti-Christian Turks, and expressed the solidarity of the Russian and Finnish defenders, who had shed their blood for Finland.⁷⁶ This was too much for a few pro-Western liberals in the country, but generally the Crimean War did strengthen Finnish loyalty to the Empire. Schauman recounts that it was the duty of the towns was to treat the marching troops to spirits, sandwiches and whatever they needed, which was done eagerly, until the mass of incoming troops made the duty rather burdensome. But "in the restaurants one could hear only sabres rattling, spurs jingling, champagne corks popping, and silver

75 Minister of War to the commander of troops in Finland 4. II 1854. O razmeshchenii voisk v Finliandii v 1854 g dlia obshchei oboronu kraia, p. 8. Ven sot asiak 62, National Archives of Finland.

76 "Den första blodsdroppen", *Helsingfors Tidningar* 24.V.1854. (The First Drop of Blood).



"The Crimean War, Tammisaari 20 May 1854. Coloured lithograph by Morel Fatio. The steam frigate *Arrogant* destroys a Russian battery on the coast, while the steam corvette *Hecla* captures a Russian ship". Defending troops dispersed at numerous exposed points on long coastlines offered easy victories for naval raiders, and taught the Russians that it was better to concentrate troops in the principal fortresses and leave the minor forts undefended.

Photo: Museovirasto Neg 116168.

roubles rolling early and late..."⁷⁷ Sometimes it was reported that the Finnish population spontaneously treated the marching troops to vodka or tobacco.⁷⁸ Clearly, in the opinion of the Finns in general, the

⁷⁷ Schauman, *Kuudelta vuosikymmeneltä*, vol. II, p. 69.

⁷⁸ "Erään venäläisen joukko-osaston päällikön pyyntö, että Suomen virallisessa lehdessä julkaistaisiin kiitos Porin kaupungin asukkaille sen johdosta, että he mainitun joukko-osaston marssiessa kaupungin läpi kestitsivät sitä viinalla, oluella ja tupakalla sekä että samanlainen kiitos julkituotaisiin myös Kristiinankaupungissa..." KKK 47/1865; "Helsingin kaupungin asukkaiden keisarin nimipäivän johdosta keskuudestaan keräämän 1800 markan suuruisen erän käyttäminen heidän toivomuksestaan mainittuna päivänä Helsingissä olevan venäläisen sotaväen

Russian troops were not a foreign army of occupation, but soldiers of their own Emperor and defenders of their country.

Emperor Nicholas I himself visited Finland to inspect the defence organization and received a very good impression of his Finnish subjects.⁷⁹ The loyalty of the Finnish subjects, which was manifested during the war, was to have important political consequences later.

The most notable naval and military operation took place on Åland. The Allies attacked the fortress of Bomarsund in July-August 1854. The defending troops, forty-two officers, 1,942 garrison infantry and 112 gunners, surrendered after a short defence, and after losing fifty-three dead and thirty-six wounded. They were taken prisoners of war, two Finnish grenadier companies among them. The fortress was then blown up.⁸⁰ Afterwards, Emperor Alexander II exonerated Colonel Bodisco, commander of the fortress, from blame for surrendering it after so little loss of life.⁸¹ Probably, it was deemed that, without any naval support, the unfinished fortress had been too difficult to defend effectively against the superior Allied force.

A garrison battalion from Tver or the Novgorod *guberniia* local troops was ordered to be transformed into a line battalion and transferred to Finland. The march was long and difficult, because internal troops were strictly for local defence and lacked horses and carriages for movement. The battalion was given the number of the 10th Line Battalion of Finland, to replace the one shattered at Bomarsund.⁸² The commander of the battalion was Major Kuznetsov, who had been decorated for valour after the defence of Kokkola against the British landing.

During the war years, the troops in Finland were constantly replenished.⁸³ In May 1855, there were 43,500 Russian soldiers in

kestitsemissä", KKK 47/1866, National Archives of Finland. (Official thanks for the gift of refreshments to Russian troops by the inhabitants of Pori and Helsinki).

79 Borodkin, "Finskii voiska pri Imperatore Nikolae I"; see also: Borodkin, *Kriget vid Finlands kuster 1854-1855*. Borodkin's intention was to stress the former Finnish loyalty towards the absolutist emperor, in contrast to the separatist feelings of Finns in his own times vis-a-vis the Russia of Nicholas I.

80 RGAVMF, fond 19, opis' 4, delo 427, zaniatie Alanda nepriatel'skimi voiskami 1854, Ob oborone Ålandskikh ostrovov 1854 g. Ven sot asiak 32; O vziatii Ålandskoi kreposti 1854 g. Ven sot asiak 31. National Archives of Finland.

81 "Bomarsund", *Voennaia Entsiklopediia*, vol. IV, p. 639.

82 RGViA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 303 shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh, O pereimenovanii Tverskago Vnutrennyi Garnizonnago bataliona v Finliandskii Lineinii bataljon No. 10. Raport Voennomu ministru 22.8/3.9.1854.

Finland. The army was supported by about sixty rowed gun-boats in the coastal archipelago.⁸⁴

The native defenders of Finland

After the situation in Åland had been resolved in the Allies' favour, the enemy was expected to attack Helsinki either directly from the sea or through a landing at Espoo (Esbo) and Porkkala.⁸⁵ We have already seen the local population in Pohjanmaa with their hunting guns taking part in the defence of their homes together with the Russians. The Minister of War advised the Governor-General to make the Finns form partisan or guerilla detachments to operate in the enemy's rear and on his flanks in order at least to delay him.⁸⁶

A more regular participation of Finns was organized as quickly as possible. The Finnish grenadier battalion left two of its companies prisoners of war in Bomarsund with the Russian 10th Line Battalion, but the two others took part in the defence of Helsinki in 1855 with the Russian grenadiers. The Finnish naval contribution was reinforced by a second naval equipage for the duration of the war. The guards battalion operated with the Imperial army, not in the Crimea but on the Western border preparing against an eventual Austrian attack or Prussian treachery.

Minister State Secretary Alexander Armfelt proposed raising more Finnish troops to defend the long coasts of the Grand Duchy, and Rokassovski agreed. After the Kokkola incident, the Finns, it was felt, would put up a strong defence of their homes against the enemy. Instead of resorting to enlistment, the ancient *indelta* military system of crofter soldiers, hired by a few peasants each, was revived. The Minister of War, Prince Dolgorukov, supported the idea and Nicholas I accepted the measure in the summer 1854. The peasants were persuaded to consent to the hiring of one soldier for every two

83 RGVIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 320 shtaba voisk v Finliandii raspolozhennykh, O pereimenovanii Novgorodskago garnizonnago batal'iona v finliandskim lineinym No 10i batal'ion, i raspredelenii sego bataliona v vse finliandskie lineinie batalioni (correspondence 8. VII. 1855 – 18. III. 1856).

84 *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota*, vol. I, pp. 196–199.

85 Governor General to Minister of War 14/26. VII 1854. Ob oborone Alandskikh ostrov 1854 g. Ven sot asiak 32, National Archives of Finland.

86 Minister of War to Governor General 19/31. VII 1854. Ob oborone Alandskikh ostrov. Ven sot asiak 32, National Archives of Finland.



"The Finnish *indelta* troops 1854–55". The *indelta* troops, or crofter soldiers hired by and from the peasantry, were an obsolete form of military force, and their officers were rather amateurish though eager fighters.

Photo: Museovirasto Neg 7548.

vacancies in the old system, i.e. nine battalions in all. Casimir von Kothen, who had been an aide-de-camp to Menschikoff in 1833–44 and had thereafter served in administrative tasks and had organized the optical telegraph in 1854, aided Rokassovski and his successor Count Berg in organizing the *indelta* troops and was appointed their

inspector in December 1855.⁸⁷ Reviving the nearly forgotten organization took plenty of time and only six battalions were completed before the war ended. The soldiers were given crofts, but the officers were salaried, i.e. they did not receive estates as under the old system. Finnish-born officers from Finnish and Russian detachments were transferred to these battalions.

In 1856, the battalion headquarter staffs were located at

1. Turku (Åbo)
2. Vaasa (renamed Nikolaistad in 1855)
3. Oulu (Uleåborg)
4. Kuopio
5. Mikkeli (St Michels)
6. Hämeenlinna (Tavastehus)
7. Pori (Björneborg)
8. Porvoo (Borgå)
9. Lappeenranta (Villmandstrand)

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The 7th-9th battalions were organized later than the first six and were not completely formed before the war ended.

After the war, the system was maintained but the soldiers were demobilized and sent to their crofts. The strength of the battalions was reduced from six hundred to three hundred and twenty men, and only local musterings were held for a few weeks each summer until 1863, when a new war threatened, and a bigger parade was held and inspected by Alexander II.

In all, about nine thousand Finns were under arms during the Crimean War:

Finnish troops during the war

the Guards Battalion	1,000
the grenadiers	1,000
1st Naval Equipage	1,000
2nd Naval Equipage	500
<i>indelta</i> battalions	5,400. ⁸⁸

87 "Casimir von Kothen", *Kansallinen elämäkerrasto*, vol. III, pp. 218–21.

88 Palmén & Gripenberg, "Suomen kansan puolustustaakka eri aikoina" (The burden of defence in Finland at various times); Seitkari, "Piirteitä Suomen ruotuväen uudelleen järjestämisestä vv. 1854–1856" (The reorganization of the *indelta* military). The round numbers indicate the nominal battle strength, not the actual number of men in service.



"The Bombardment of Sveaborg. Lithograph F. Liewendahl 1855." The Allied fleet did not approach close enough to cause serious destruction in the fortress, although a few constructions were shattered and storehouses burned. It did not occur to the admiral to fire on the spectators; terror bombardments had not yet been brought back into use.
Photo: Museovirasto Neg 67988.

The penetration of the Gulf of Finland

Napier's and Plumridge's war against civilians roused criticism in London and for the campaign of 1855 Vice-Admiral Sir Richard Dundas was sent to the Baltic. The Allies penetrated deeper into the Gulf of Finland and destroyed the weak, obsolete forts at Ruotsinsalmi and Svartholma.⁸⁹ Thus, it was clearly demonstrated that small, isolated forts were useless against a naval enemy who was able to concentrate all his forces on an attack from the sea against any point on the coast. The exposed position at Hankoniemi was voluntarily abandoned by the Russians.

In December 1854, von Berg, until then Military Governor of

89 Airola-Harjunpää, "Ruotsinsalmen merilinnoitus 1790–1855" (The naval fortress of Ruotsinsalmi). About the defence and destruction of Svartholma: Ven sot asiak 88, National Archives of Finland.



Estonia, was appointed Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in Finland, after Menschikoff, because he was deemed more energetic than the acting Governor-General, the popular but easy-going Rokassovskii.⁹⁰

The greatest show of force by the Allies was the bombardment of Sveaborg on 9–10 August 1855. The ships kept outside the range of the obsolete fortress guns; their own guns were able to reach the fortress, but from such a distance as to render the bombardment rather ineffectual. A few buildings were destroyed, but the hundred-year old

90 Fredrik Wilhelm Rembert von Berg, distinguished himself in the Turkish war of 1828–29 and in the quelling of the Polish rebellion in 1831. After the Crimean War Berg favoured Finnish national ideas, but quarrelled with the liberals and with Minister State Secretary Armfelt. He was replaced by his predecessor Rokassovskii in 1861, fought against the Poles again in 1863, and was promoted Field Marshal in 1866. "Berg, von", *Kansallinen elämäkerrasto*, vol. I, pp. 204–08.

stone walls withstood the bombardment rather well. The Russians lost fifty-five killed and 203 wounded. The attempted landing on the western flank of Helsinki at Lauttasaari was fended off by Ramsay's grenadiers, with thirty-three British casualties.⁹¹ The inhabitants of Helsinki admired the bombardment as a grand show of fireworks; it did not occur to the Admirals to fire upon the civilian spectators on the Kaivopuisto (Brunnsparken) cliffs.⁹²

The show had thus no immediate military importance. But, in fact, it was strategically menacing. Clearly, a naval threat was approaching Kronstadt and St Petersburg. When, a month later, in September 1855, Sevastopol surrendered, the Allied floating armoured and steam-powered batteries, direct forefathers of monitors and indirect predecessors of all dreadnoughts, were free to be transferred to the Baltic for the following year's campaign.⁹³ Then the stone walls of Sveaborg and Kronstadt, and even the quays of St Petersburg could have been bombarded with real effect.

Considerations for an expected campaign of 1856

Governor-General Berg, who was responsible for the defence plans for 1856, had to take the growing threat into account, because in the light of the previous years' experience it was probable that the enemy would again attack through the Baltic Sea. There also existed the danger of Denmark and Sweden "losing their head" and joining the enemy as Sardinia had done. It was true that the Swedish government had kept cool until then, but it would probably not be able to withstand revolutionary Scandinavianism and revanchist propaganda for the reconquest of Finland.

Berg calculated that the enemy forces would amount to fifty thousand Frenchmen, ten thousand British soldiers, and thirty-five thousand Danes and Swedes, in all ninety-five thousand men. He did not expect that they would attack the Baltic provinces, i. e. Livonia or Estonia. It was true that there the enemy could destroy Reval and

91 T., "Viaporin pommitus elokuussa 1855; eräs 75-vuotismuisto" (The 75-year memory of the bombardment of Sveaborg), *Suomen sotilas* 36-37/1930, pp. 484-86. Official reports on the bombardment: Ven sot asiak 94, National Archives of Finland.

92 Schauman, *Kuudelta vuosikymmeneltä*, vol. II, pp. 100-08.

93 Treue, *Der Krimkrieg und die Entstehung der modernen Flotten*.

Riga, but it would not be easy to advance further in the absence of Prussian support on the southern flank, nor could the enemy count on a Polish or Lithuanian rebellion against Russia. And an attack on the "limitless *gubernii*" of Russia was not feasible with even bigger armies, as the French had cause to remember from 1812. St Petersburg, in the north-east, was a first-class objective for such an attack, but it was so well protected that two hundred thousand men would be necessary for its conquest. Even such a force would need naval support from the Gulf of Finland.

Thus an invasion of Finland was the most probable choice for the enemy, thought Berg, and the conquest of Finland in 1856 would be the first step towards an attack against St Petersburg in 1857.

There were innumerable points on the fifteen-hundred-verst long Finnish coast where a landing could be carried out. Two-thirds of Finnish towns were situated within the reach of the enemy. The two-pronged configuration of the Gulfs of Bothnia and of Finland made it possible for the enemy to threaten the defenders from their southern front and western flank.

The fifty-thousand men concentrated in Finland in 1855 were far from sufficient to fend off the expected attack. The Governor-General calculated that at least double the number would be necessary; he demanded 110 battalions, 43 sotnias, and 120 guns. Even with this force, Berg deemed it impossible to defend the whole country. The troops had to be concentrated to secure Helsinki and Sveaborg.

The Governor-General assumed that the Sveaborg fortress would be able to fight off an assault from the sea and secure the Kruunu-vuorenselkä fleet anchorage. But the fortress was defenceless on its land side, and Helsinki on its narrow peninsula was exposed to landings on either flank. That was why field troops were necessary to defend the Finnish capital.

A second important consideration was securing the communications from Finland to Russia. The ancient fortifications on the eighteenth-century border [i.e. close to the River Kymi] had fallen into decrepitude and the coastal road was exposed to enemy landings. Thus the field army had also to undertake responsibility for the road.⁹⁴

It is natural for a commanding officer to stress the needs of the

94 O voennykh deistviiakh vozmozhnykh na Severe, v kampaniiu budushchago 1856 goda. Ven sot asiak 71, p. 52. National Archives of Finland.

front for which he is responsible. But it is evident also that the military staff in St Petersburg understood the importance of Finland. By the end of 1855, there were about fifty battalions with eighteen sotnias and forty-eight field guns in Finland; Berg did not receive as many reinforcements as he had demanded, but in 1856 there were seventy-one battalions and eighty-four field guns in the country. The numbers of cavalry had not been increased.⁹⁵

Berg knew or guessed the enemy's intention of weakening the Empire by detaching the Grand Duchy from it. He was especially apprehensive of an eventual Swedish attack, which he regarded as a substantial aid to the enemy, because the Swedes were familiar with Finland's terrain and climate. They also knew the language, the administration and conditions in general, while the Russian defenders were not so well acquainted with circumstances in Finland.

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The Governor-General supposed that the Swedes would invade the 'north-west' of Finland, i.e. Pohjanmaa (Österbotten). He knew that the population there was of ancient Swedish stock, and old memories might be revived by a Swedish landing. The enemy, he believed, would be helped by provisions and guides. They might then easily advance to the interior, to Hämeenlinna, Jyväskylä and Kuopio or even further to Heinola, Mikkeli and Savonlinna. It was true that large numbers of troops could not live in the interior because of the general poverty of the region, and movement was difficult because roads were bad and distant from each other. But even a small number of enemy troops would constitute a strategic threat to the Russian forces in the south of Finland.⁹⁶

Obviously, Berg remembered the operations of 1808, when the Russians in the interior had constituted a strategic threat to the Swedish army on the western coast of Finland. He proposed that special light troops and an inland lake flotilla should be established to secure this region.

Berg wanted troops for Turku, too, more than the one battalion proposed by Rokassovskii in 1854. Berg declared that he did not doubt the loyalty of the Finns, who valued their welfare and understood that it was due to the constant fatherly benevolence of the Russian Emperor towards them. The Swedish democrats supposed that some sympathy

95 Seitkari, "Suomen sotalaisos Venäjän sotilashallinnon osana 1800-luvulla", p. 98.

96 O voennykh deistviiakh vozmozhnykh na Severe, v kampaniiu budushchago 1856 goda. Ven sot asiak 71, p. 52. National Archives of Finland.

remained towards the ancient mother country among the population of the south-west Finland, but they were very much mistaken, argued Berg.

But volatile and thoughtless youth might err, and the demagogues would contend that their pranks represented public opinion in Finland. Thus Turku could not be denuded of a Russian military presence.⁹⁷

This memorandum indicates Berg's general line of thought or policy in office. He favoured the Finnish movement, which was fast turning from being a romantic expression into a nationalistic force. In his time, Menschikoff had become suspicious of the 'Jacobin Fennomans', but Berg was more concerned about the Swedish-speaking country population and the educated elite with its Western cultural orientation and separatist administrative inclinations. That was why he favoured the Finnish-speaking people; e.g., the leader of the national movement, Johan Vilhelm Snellman, was made a professor in 1856 and Senator in 1863. Berg fell foul of Minister State Secretary Alexander Armfelt, an eminent member of the governing aristocracy of the Grand Duchy. Berg "made himself intolerable" and had to leave office. It was, in fact, a general belief among Russia's governing circles that the common folk in the ethnically different border regions were loyal towards the Emperor and that only the educated elites in Poland, the Baltic provinces and Finland, with their alien Western ideas, were estranged from Russia.

Berg's ideas are of interest because they give some idea of Finland's military importance as a glacis of St Petersburg, and the influence of military considerations on Russia's policy towards the border country.

Berg had no intention of Russifying his Finnish wards. On the contrary, he believed that making the population Finnish instead of Swedish was the proper policy for the Imperial government. Russians welcomed the Finnish national poem 'Kalevala' because it signified that the Finns had found their eastern, Fenno-Ugric roots and had got rid of the sour Swedish leadership.⁹⁸ There had been many upper-class Russian visitors in Helsinki in the 1830's and 1840's when foreign travel was forbidden, and also some interest in Russian culture among Finns.

97 O voennykh deistviiakh vozmozhnykh na Severe, v kampaniiu budushchago 1856 goda. Ven sot asiak 71, p. 52. National Archives of Finland.

98 Grot, *Matka Suomessa 1846*, p. 16. (A voyage in Finland).

But, in fact, the Finns had no intention of moving closer to the Russians. Rather than that, some of them dreamed of rousing up the other Fenno-Ugric minorities in Russia to oppose the Imperial oppression; but even this remained the dream of a tiny minority. The Finnish movement aimed mainly at bringing up the Finns on the Western model and making them culturally and materially strong enough to withstand any future Russification, which the Fennoman leaders supposed was coming soon, but which, they hoped, might be put off for a while by unconditional loyalty towards the Emperor.

The end of the war

There was no campaign in 1856 or 1857, and it is not possible to tell whether the apprehensions of the Governor-General were well founded or not because Sweden did not join the war and peace soon followed.

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Nicholas I died in February 1855,⁹⁹ and was succeeded on the throne by his son Alexander II. After the fall of Sevastopol in September, Russia gave up the hopeless war. The Allies were quite ready to desist from further attack. With the war-time alliance, France had broken out of her isolation, and Napoleon III could not afford any more losses in his conscript army. Palmerston might have gone on, because Russia was far from being rendered harmless, but political opinion in London had grown disillusioned with the bloody events of the war.

Peace was signed in Paris in 1856.

Sweden-Norway had not taken part in the war and the country was left out of the peace treaty. The only reward for Scandinavian benevolent neutrality towards the Western allies was the guarantee of their territorial integrity, signed in the previous November, which simultaneously placed the United Kingdom of Sweden and Norway under a certain degree of tutelage of the Great Powers.

The Swedes would have liked to see Russia deprived of both navy and fortresses on her Baltic coasts, parallel to the demilitarization of the Black Sea. The Western Powers thought that the demilitarization of the Åland archipelago was security enough for Sweden. Stockholm

⁹⁹ The council of Vaasa – named after the ancient Swedish dynasty – decided to adopt the name Nikolaistad for their town, a further profession of loyalty towards the Monarchy. The new name lost its attraction under Nicholas II and was officially changed back to Vaasa after the revolution in 1917.

was thus freed from a strong Russian naval and military presence in its immediate vicinity. In fact, the demilitarization was in the interest of the Western victors, because it kept the Russian navy confined to its bases in the Gulf of Finland and left the Western Baltic Sea open for the Western navies, especially the British.

Notwithstanding their difficult wartime experiences and especially their maritime losses, the Finns had reasons enough to be satisfied with their position at the end of the war. Alexander II, the new Russian Emperor, could see that the policy of his predecessors towards Finland had been successful. The local population had remained loyal during this difficult time, and had even taken part in preparations for the defence of their home country. And the secure possession of the border Grand Duchy guaranteed the safety of the Imperial capital against a naval attack.¹⁰⁰

101

REFORMS AND INTERRUPTIONS

From defeat to reform

After the Crimean War, the Russian army remained rather disorganized, what with the losses of men and material, while the Imperial finances were in an even worse condition.

The war had revealed the backwardness of Russia's society and economy compared with the Western Powers. For centuries the army had been improved, developed, and enlarged to the detriment of all other functions of the government; and now the Russian state had proved incompetent in its main field of activity. Even the worst reactionaries understood that reforms were necessary; Russia needed railways and industry powered by steam if she wanted to survive in the competition between the Great Powers. During the next decade reforms were carried out, and for the rest of the century the economy and society developed with increasing speed, but unevenly, so that friction was created between sectors which were progressing rapidly

100 There is no end of literature on the Åland War, e.g. Wallin; Schulman; Nervander & Estlander; Hannula; Tarle, *Vostochnaia Voina 1853-56 godov*; A.M. Zaionchovskii.

and those which were stagnating.

Reforming the army was a giant task and started slowly. Nicholas's last Minister of War Dolgorukov, redesigned uniforms, and Alexander II's first Minister of War, Sukhozanet, abolished the notorious military settlements, where part of the army had been living by their own agricultural work under a despotic military discipline.

It was Dmitrii Alekseevich Miliutin who modernized the army during his period in the War Ministry from 1861–81, supported by his able aides, Fedor Logginovich Heiden and N.N. Obruchev.

Nevertheless, the Emperor remained the supreme commander-in-chief and all important orders had to be approved by him. The Emperors – Alexander II, Alexander III and Nicholas II – were always interested in military matters, especially in appointments to the senior posts. Grand Dukes of the Romanov family were often appointed to high commands or to be inspectors of the various military branches, e.g., cavalry, artillery, schools, or to be Admiral-General of the navy. The Grand Dukes were notoriously indisciplined and incompetent at these tasks and often caused grave disorder in the military administration.¹⁰¹

In 1863 new infantry regiments were established and old ones given numbers and locality names. The regiments in Finland got back their old town names and received new numbers: they were thereafter the 85th *Vyborgskii*, the 86th *Vil'manstrandskii*, the 87th *Neishlottskii* and the 88th *Petrovskii* regiments. In the Empire, eight further regiments, organized into two new divisions, which we shall meet in Finland before long, were established in the neighbouring *gubernii*, and further new regiments were established in other regions, so that the 200th *Kronshlottskii* regiment was the last one in numerical order.¹⁰²

The military organization had grown rather confused; the field armies in Poland and in the South had been directly subordinated to the Emperor, while the regional infantry divisions had been under the Ministry of War, except in borderlands, where the Governor-Generals were also military commanders-in-chief; cavalry, artillery and engineers as well as military schools were under their own inspectors, and local troops under the *guberniia* governors. Instead of this chaotic lack of system, in 1864 the Empire was divided into military districts,

101 Zaionchkovskii, P.A., *Voennye reformy 1860-1870 godov*, pp. 59, 86, 108.

102 Kersnovskii, *Istoriia russkoi armii*, vol II, pp. 200–01.

whose commanders were under the Minister's orders, and who in turn commanded all troops and army installations in their area. They were responsible for preparations for mobilization in case of a war, and the commanders and staffs of the military districts close to imperial borders (Odessa, Kiev, Warsaw, Vilna, St Petersburg) were to form field-army commands. The first military district was that of the Guards Troops and St Petersburg; it was commanded initially by Grand Duke Vladimir Aleksandrovich and then by Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholasovich; their chiefs of staff carried out the routine affairs of the district. Finland was the second military district, the 3rd consisted of the Baltic provinces, the 4th was Vilna, the 5th Warsaw, the 6th Kiev, the 7th Odessa, the 8th Moscow, the 9th Kharkov, the 10th Kazan, the 11th Saratov, the 12th Caucasus, the 13th Orenburg, the 14th Omsk, and the 15th Irkutsk; the Don Cossacks had their own military organization. There were a few changes later in the system: the Baltic district was abolished and divided between St. Petersburg and Vilna in 1870, so that the defence of the Baltic coast, Finland excepted until 1905, was under the staff in the capital.¹⁰³ After the conquest of Central Asia, Turkestan was under a military administration located at Tashkent.

Miliutin energetically tried to improve the educational level of the army. Soldiers were taught to read in order to make further training more efficient. Cadet schools were transformed into military high schools and officers' schools (*voennye gimnazii* and *voennye uchiliche*). Only the Hamina Cadet School and the Corps of Pages in St Petersburg remained in their traditional form, but even their teaching was modernized. Lower-rank officers were trained in the yunker schools, where exceptionally even non-commissioned officers of peasant origins could start a career as an officer. Staff officers and specialists were schooled in the Nicholas (*Nikolaevskii*) Military Academy of the General Staff and in cavalry, artillery, engineering, judicial and medical academies.

Battle training remained outside the Minister's competence, directed by the various arms inspectors, and tended to be conservative, ignoring the development of firearms. As late as the end of the century General Dragomirov, commander of the Kiev military district, stressed Suvorov's teaching that the bullet was a coward, and only the bayonet

103 Bogdanovich, vol. IV, p. 51.

was brave. The Guards were the model for the army troops, and their magnificent parade manoeuvres at the camp of Tsarskoe Selo maintained the importance of the ancient line formations. The inspector of the cavalry, Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevich, the future commander in chief in 1914–15, trained his men to turn in straight lines four kilometres long,¹⁰⁴ if the stories are true.

Russia's poverty slowed down the furnishing of the army with modern weapons. The old smooth-bore cannons started being replaced by rifled ones in the 1860's, but soon the new guns were made obsolete by breech-loading and quick-firing cannons of 7.62 cm calibre. Heavy guns were positioned mainly in the fortresses. The six-tenths-of-an-inch or six-line infantry handguns were replaced with the 4.2-line Berdan rifles in the 1870's, and by the end of the century they in turn were made obsolete by the three-line or 7.6 millimetre Mosin magazine rifles. To replace the millions of handguns and thousands of cannons was both slow and expensive. Machine-guns were introduced at the beginning of the twentieth century, as was also the mortar, but their number increased slowly.

Preparations against a Western intervention in 1863

Military reforms were repeatedly disturbed by various international conflicts, actual or threatening. Four army corps were mobilized in 1859 on the Austrian border to put pressure on the Habsburg government. This was in support of France, which was fighting with Sardinia to liberate Italy from the Austrians. The feeling in Russia towards the recent enemy had been somewhat improved because at the peace conference of Paris Napoleon III had behaved with more restraint than the British or the Austrians towards the vanquished.

The unification of Italy did not, however, give rise to a great international conflict. No special defence efforts were necessary on the Baltic coasts. But the Polish rebellion of 1863 brought with it the danger of an international intervention, which menaced peace in the Baltic peace as well. The Poles had not been satisfied with their

104 Linder, *Keisarillisen kaartin upseerina*, p. 126 (Memoirs of L. from Service in the Imperial Guards). Miliutin's reforms are ably described by P.A. Zaionchkovskii, and with even more detail, especially in the material questions, by Beskrovnyi, *Russkaia armia i flot v XIX veke: Voенно-ekonomicheskii potentsial Rossii*.

Kingdom in 1815, and even less with the reduced autonomy after their rebellion of 1830–31, and their dissatisfaction was only inflamed by partial concessions in 1861.

With the new Polish rebellion, Napoleon III proved an unreliable friend for Russia. Together with British and Austrian leaders, he again sketched out new arrangements for Eastern and Central European areas and borders. St Petersburg received official messages which offered Western mediation between the Russian government and the rebels, and proposed reforms in Poland.¹⁰⁵

At the worst moments it seemed that Russia might lose Poland, not only the kingdom created in 1815, but the ancient greater Poland which reached to the Black Sea.¹⁰⁶ The Empress sighed: "I hope we could at least hold on to Lithuania".¹⁰⁷

In reaction to the threat of losing the western provinces, Slavophile and Panslavist national feeling burst out into Greater Russian chauvinism. The former liberal, Mikhail Katkov, started to snarl in his newspaper *Moskovskii Vedomosti* against the treacherous Slav brothers. The Polish demands for their ancient eastern regions shocked Katkov.¹⁰⁸ Not only were the dynastic interests of the Romanov family endangered,¹⁰⁹ but national Russian achievements, too, because the Empire was a creation of the people and must be preserved in its holy unity.¹¹⁰ Losing these provinces would be equivalent to suicide for Russia,¹¹¹ which would thereby fall from its Great-Power position gained in the wars of 1812–15.¹¹² The diplomatic intervention of the foreign Powers in Russia's internal affairs was especially demeaning; such intervention was usual when Turkey, Persia or China oppressed their Christian subjects.¹¹³ Russia had to resort to armed force to save its international position and prestige if the Western Powers were really demanding her compliance with their demands for Poland.¹¹⁴

Katkov did not remain alone. A burst of national indignation swept

105 Leslie, *Reform and insurrection in Russian Poland 1856–1865*, pp. 170–202.

106 Murawjew, *Der Diktator von Vilna*, p. 19.

107 Murawjew, *Der Diktator von Vilna*, p. 21.

108 *Moskovskii Vedomosti* 30. I 1863.

109 *Moskovskii Vedomosti* 27. III 1863.

110 *Moskovskii Vedomosti* 9. III 1863.

111 *Moskovskii Vedomosti* 29. III 1863.

112 *Moskovskii Vedomosti* 10. IV 1863.

113 *Moskovskii Vedomosti* 14. II, 24. II, 26. II, etc etc 1863.

114 *Moskovskii Vedomosti* 20. IV, 22. VIII 1863.

Russia and affected even the court, government offices and military staffs. The subsequent development of ideas was felt in Imperial policy towards Finland, though a little later on.

But military steps for defence against an eventual enemy attack were started immediately, even in Finland. After the Crimean War, the garrison in Finland had consisted of the 22nd Infantry Division, reduced, after two of its battalions had been transferred to Kronstadt in November 1856, to eight battalions and two batteries; and of the fortress troops at Sveaborg and Viipuri together with other local detachments of minimal fighting value. There had been plans for reducing the number of line battalions to three and stationing a grenadier division in Finland, with two regiments or four battalions at Sveaborg, and another two regiments with three battalions in Helsinki and one battalion in Viipuri. The peacetime strength of the troops would have been 9,800 men with 7,040 additional reservists to be mobilized in wartime. For some – probably financial – reason the plan was abandoned.¹¹⁵ But the idea always was to reduce expenditure and with it the number of local troops who had little fighting value, and simultaneously to increase the "moral importance" of the stationing of Imperial troops in Finland, that is, by cultivating through their presence the loyalty of the population to the Empire and their respect towards the army.¹¹⁶ Here the value of grenadier troops would have been great since they enjoyed a higher reputation than troops of the line.

Now, in 1863, with a renewed enemy threat from the Baltic Sea, the garrison in Finland was reinforced, again with the 1st Grenadier Division, familiar from the days of the Crimean War. The two divisions were topped up to their wartime strength with eleven thousand 'prematurely discharged' soldiers, i.e. reservists who had not served their twenty-five years, and with 5,800 fresh recruits.¹¹⁷ The wartime numbers were about double the peacetime strength. Cossacks,

115 RG VIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 343 o pereformirovanii Finliandskikh lineinykh batalionov i naznachenii v Finliandii odnoi divizii Grenaderskogo Korpusa, 1857; Ob otmene pereformirovanii 22 pekhotnoi divizii i predpolagavshaia zaniatiia Finliandii divizioneiu Grenaderskogo Korpusa 16. XI 1857.

116 RG VIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 381, ob uprazhnenii Neishlotskoi Invalidnoi Komandoi [...] Plan zaniatii Finliandii v mirmoe vremia russkimi voiskami [...] Osnovaniia dlia organizatsii voisk.

117 By the end of September 1863, 8,807 men had arrived and 2,255 were still expected. RG VIA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 24 Delo ob uspekhakh priniatykh mer dlia privedeniia zapadnoi Finliandii v oboronitel'noe polozhenie 2. VIII – 8. IX 1863; by the end of October 1,418 men had still not arrived.

artillery, sappers, fortress infantry and fortress artillery were increased as well. The summer of 1863 was spent labouring on the improvement of fortresses, replenishing the troops, and acquiring materials. Even the Finnish *indelta* soldiers were again called to their battalions from their crofts. In all, the peacetime garrison of seventeen thousand men in Finland was increased to more than fifty thousand.¹¹⁸

The old abandoned walls at Lappeenranta and Kymijoki were repaired in order to secure the road to Viipuri and Russia. Forts were added on the seaward front of the Viipuri fortress and field fortifications were erected along the road to St. Petersburg. There are scattered bits of information about small local detachments even elsewhere in Finland; seven officers and 412 soldiers were quartered at Rauma in 1863, ten officers and 700 men in 1864.¹¹⁹ An inland lake flotilla was again planned,¹²⁰ and it is said that a barge called *Hippopotam* really did sail on Lake Näsijärvi, and a flotilla on Lake Päijänne was manned by the naval equipage.¹²¹ In Hämeenlinna, at the strategically important knot of road communications, barracks had been planned in the 1840s and had been constructed in 1848-51; the ancient castle was of no contemporary military value, but now in 1863 large areas were acquired for new field fortifications which were armed with fifty-six guns, and a few ships were armed on Vanajavesi Lake.¹²² The castle was to serve as a refuge for the archives and money to be evacuated from the exposed capital, a function the castle had served during the Crimean War.

Sveaborg was again the place where the most important work was done. Its dilapidated walls were repaired, its obsolete batteries were modernized and armed with more modern guns against ironclad ships.¹²³

118 Otchet Voennomu Ministru o merakh priniatykh dlia privedeniia v oboronitelnoe polozhenie Finliandii, 1863-64. Ven sot asiak 152, pp. 80, 124-27. National Archives of Finland.

119 Lähteenoja, *Rauma 1809-1917*. (History of Rauma).

120 145,000 ruplan myöntämisestä Saimaalle, Päijänteelle ja Näsijärvelle soveliaitten sotalaivojen rakentamiseksi sisämaan turvaamiseksi vihollishyökkäyksen varalta. KKK 3 II/1863, National Archives of Finland. (granting 145,000 roubles for the construction of warships for Lakes Saimaa, Päijänne, and Näsijärvi to secure the interior in case of enemy attack).

121 Mattila, "Suomen laivastovoimien vaiheita ennen itsenäisyyden aikaa", p. 42.

122 Bogdanovich, vol. IV, pp. 348, 355; Lindeqvist, *Hämeenlinnan kaupungin historia vuosina 1809-75*, p. 220. (History of Hämeenlinna).

123 Otchet Voennomu Ministru o merakh priniatykh dlia privedeniia v oboronitelnoe polozhenie Finliandii, 1863-64. Ven sot asiak 152, pp. 25-28. National Archives of Finland.

Alexander II came to inspect the defence works. A parade was held at Parola, not far from Hämeenlinna. The Emperor also inspected the works at Sveaborg,¹²⁴ and it seems that he was satisfied with what he saw.

The documents concerning the defence works are financial accounts and do not contain any of the military plans for the defence. But the works were concentrated at Sveaborg and in Viipuri and their mutual communications, especially through Hämeenlinna. It is easy to conclude that the defence plan was similar to that of the days of the Crimean War. The Western Powers were expected to attack from the Baltic Sea. The Swedes, if they should join the enemy, were expected to make a landing on the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia and advance to the rear of the Russian troops which were defending the southern coast.

In the end, however, the Western Powers did not intervene with more effective measures than their diplomatic notes and left the Russians to put down the rebellion in Poland. As a punishment, or in order to prevent future rebellions, all traces of autonomy were abolished in Poland and the territory of the Kingdom was organized into Russian "Vistula provinces" or *gubernii*.

Political consequences in Finland

During the period of reforms, Alexander II wanted all his Empire, Finland included, to develop in a modern direction. Because the border country had a self-government of proven loyalty, the Emperor, in 1856, dictated a programme of reforms for Finland to be carried out by the Finnish Senate. A lively political discussion followed and it was soon concluded that to implement the reforms new laws and taxes were needed. In Finnish opinion, increasingly liberal since the 1840's, these could not be decreed without the consent of the people's representatives.

Alexander first hesitated convening a Finnish parliament because Russia could not be given one. But when the Polish rebellion broke out, the blameless loyalty of the Finns made possible the concession, and the necessity of further securing their loyalty made the Emperor

124 Seitkari, "Suomeen sijoitettujen joukkojen liikekannallepanon taustaa v. 1863", p. 390. (Background to the Mobilization of the Troops Garrisoned in Finland).



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"Military parade on the Senate Square in Helsinki, probably held during the Diet meeting of 1863". Important public occasions were graced by military parades; while the Finns developed their constitutional life, the presence of the army reminded them of the loyalty due to the Emperor.

Photo: Museovirasto Neg 60350 B.

consent to their wishes. In 1863, representatives of the four Estates, the nobles, clergy, burghers, and peasants convened, and constitutional political life started. This was also a demonstration to the West that Russia knew how to deal humanely with loyal subjects; the barbarity with which the Poles were said to be visited was only reserved for rebellious lawbreakers.

Finnish loyalty was symbolized by the Guards Battalion. After serving as guard of honour at the opening of the Diet, the battalion was shipped over the Gulf of Finland and marched on to quell the rebellious Poles. In the West, the Finns were reproached for their most obedient enthusiasm for their Emperor,¹²⁵ but a rebellion against the lawful and anointed monarch was incomprehensible to the majority of the Finnish people.

In Western eyes, it seemed that the Polish rebellion was an uprising of a national minority against Tsarist oppression and for Western ideals against oriental tyranny, and the Finns, too, were expected to join the rising.¹²⁶ Among the student youth in Helsinki, there had been a few ideas about creating an armed secret society for Finland's liberation from the Empire in 1859–61 when it seemed that the Emperor was reluctant to consent to constitutional reforms.¹²⁷ The so-called big programme of the liberal circles aimed at Finnish independence from Russia. But these ideas were generally understood to lie far beyond the sphere of what was politically attainable.¹²⁸ It is true that the liberal newspaper *Helsingfors Dagblad* wrote about the necessity of Finland remaining neutral in case the Western powers should resort to military measures against Russia.¹²⁹ Of course, liberals could not feel very much sympathy towards Tsarist Russia. But it seems that the newspaper, though lacking in judgement, did not really mean treason. The liberals had close ties with businessmen and shipowners who were worried about the fate of the Finnish merchant

125 Borodkin, *Finskiia voiska pri Imperatore Nikolae I*, pp. 151–53.

126 Seitkari, "Suomeen sijoitettujen joukkojen liikekannallepanon taustaa v. 1863", pp. 383–85.

127 Ohto Manninen, "Punainen Tasavalta (1859–1861); Leikkimielisestä salaseurasta kansallishengen ahjoksi." (The Red Republic; from a Playful Secret Society to Nationalist Strivings).

128 Krusius-Ahrenbeg, *Der Durchbruch des Nationalismus und Liberalismus im politischen Leben Finnlands 1856–1863*.

129 "Våra önsknningar och fordringar vid närvarande tidpunkt", *Helsingfors Dagblad* 7. IX. 1863 (Our wishes and demands at the present moment); Hyvämäki, *Suomalaiset ja suurpolitiikka*, (Finns and Great Power politics), pp. 154–66.

fleet, which sailed under the Russian flag and was defenceless against the navies of the Western Powers, as had been proved during the Crimean War. Their concern was also demonstrated by a petition to the Russian Foreign Ministry for an international agreement or treaty to protect private property in naval war.¹³⁰

Katkov, in principle, did not like Finnish constitutional autonomy, although at first he pictured Finnish loyalty as a model to hold up to the rebellious Poles and shame them for their insurrection.¹³¹ But the proposal for neutrality provoked an angry answer from him, in which he stressed the sovereignty of Russia over Finland.¹³² In Katkov's view, loyalty towards the Emperor implied loyalty towards Russia and a will to be united with the Russian people. Finland was not the fatherland of Finns, there existed only one great fatherland for all subjects of the Emperor. Dreams of separatism were unnatural.¹³³

This was the beginning of the chauvinist Russian propaganda against Finnish autonomy and separatism,¹³⁴ but for a time this quarrel was of no great importance; the Poles were the main object of Russian anger.

There is no sign of military precautionary measures against any local expression of disloyalty in Finland. Finnish circumstances, different from those in Russia, caused a few practical problems, for instance, in military medicine because Finnish doctors could not speak Russian, or in billeting troops because the Finns had the odd way of living in scattered farms instead of in villages close to each other, as the Russians did.¹³⁵ Simultaneously with the *Dagblad – Moskovskii* polemics, the *Russkii Invalid*, the newspaper of the Ministry of War,

130 Eräiden suomalaisten kauppiaiden ja laivanvarustajien anomus, että Pariisissa kokoontuvassa kongressissa, johon suurin osa suurvaltoja osallistuu, nämä vallat sopisivat keskenään siitä, että v. 1856 pidetyssä Pariisin kongressissa esitetyt, puolueettomien valtojen laivoja ja näiden valtojen alamaisten omaisuutta koskevat periaatteet ulotettaisiin niinikään sotiviin valtoihin kuuluviin, yksityisten henkilöitten omistamiin laivoihin ja niissä olevaan yksityiseen omaisuuteen. KKK, delo 64/1860, National Archives of Finland. – Gorchakov naturally refused to take notice of the petition.

131 *Moskovskii Vedomosti*, 4. VI 1863.

132 *Moskovskii Vedomosti*, 27. XI 1863.

133 *Moskovskii Vedomosti*, 13. X, 2. XI, 11. XII 1863.

134 Krusius-Ahrenberg, "Dagbladsseparatismen år 1863 och den begynnande panslavismen".

135 Otchet Voennomu Ministru o merakh priniatykh dlia privedeniia v oboronitelnoe polozhenie Finliandii, 1863–64. Ven sot asiak 152, pp. 44, 152, National Archives of Finland.

published a series of factual and very favourable articles on Finland.¹³⁶ Finland as a separate state had not as yet developed so far that a real ground for conflict or mutual distrust existed, neither had Russian chauvinism developed yet.¹³⁷

When the danger was over

The Prussian wars against Denmark, Austria, and France in 1864, 1866, and 1870-71, skilfully handled by Bismarck, did not give rise to any serious danger of Great-Power conflict. They had no immediate importance for Russian military policy, nor, in consequence, did they lead to any special defence measures in Finland. The military and naval importance of German reunification was to be seen only later.

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The grenadier division had marched from St Petersburg to Helsinki on foot in 1854 and in 1863. Reinforcements from further away took weeks and months before reaching the exposed border country. In 1862, a railway had been constructed from Helsinki to Hämeenlinna, i.e. from the seaboard to the lake district, but the short line had not much military importance, except in making the evacuation of Helsinki easier in case of danger from the sea. Governor-General Adlerberg, who headed the Finnish administration from 1866 to 1881, warmly supported the idea of a railway from the first Finnish line via Viipuri to St Petersburg. There existed every reason for speeding up the arrival of reinforcements from the Empire if the number of troops in Finland was insufficient for the tasks ahead.¹³⁸ Railway construction in such a poor country needed much time and it was only in 1870 that this trunk line of the future Finnish railway network was completed. Because of the importance of military transports, the Finnish State Railways had to adopt the Russian gauge of 1,542 mm, instead of a narrow gauge which seemed more economical.

Thus Hämeenlinna lost part of its strategic importance when road transport was replaced by rail. The castle remained the intended refuge of archives and treasuries, but the Riihimäki-Viipuri-St Petersburg

136 *Russkii Invalid*, fourteen issues 3. X – 30. XI 1863.

137 An introduction to the question of Russification, see: Thaden, "The Russian Government".

138 Seitkari, "Suomen rautatiesantarmiston perustamisvaiheista" (Establishing the Railway Gendarmerie in Finland); Polvinen, *Die finnischen Eisenbahnen in den militärischen und politischen Plänen Russlands vor dem ersten Weltkrieg*, p. 45 et seq.

railway grew to be the most vitally important line of communications.

The Finnish military district was created in 1864. The Governor-General was simultaneously commander of the military district, i.e., of all troops and military installations in the Grand Duchy, subordinated to the Minister of War, while in civil affairs he was directly under the Emperor.

To recapitulate, the military district was garrisoned, first of all, by the Finnish Guards battalion. In peace-time the battalion numbered one general, eighteen officers, sixty non-commissioned officers, fifty-nine musicians, 520 riflemen, two officials, and thirty-six non-combatants. As we have seen, in wartime the battalion was usually sent to distant theatres of war to operate with the main Imperial armies.

In 1864, the 1st Grenadier Division was still in Finland with its artillery brigade and artillery park, and the 16th Don Cossack regiment, in addition to the 22nd Division and 22nd Artillery Brigade. In all, there were 931 officers and 39,074 lower ranks in the country in January 1864. Two-thirds of the troops were billeted in 'villages' during the winter of 1863-64 because there were not enough barracks; during the summer they lived in camps at Uusikaupunki, in Turku, at Hämeenlinna, at Tapanila (Mosabacka), in Helsinki, at Hamina and in Viipuri. By the end of the year, their numbers were reduced by half because the Grenadier Division and sapper battalion had marched back to their peacetime quarters in Russia.¹³⁹

In 1864-65, the 22nd Division was transferred from Finland to Novgorod, where the *Neishlotskii*, *Vil'manstrandskii* and *Vyborgskii* regiments continued their existence, far from the Finnish towns they were named after, as did also the *Petrovskii* regiment. The Finns again believed that the reason for the transfer was the too strong an element of Finnish-born officers who had sought service in the division in their home country.¹⁴⁰

The true explanation for the change may be sought in the discussion around the establishment of the military district. The idea was that in order to save expenditure, the line battalions were to be dissolved and Finland was to be garrisoned by only troops rotating from Russia; another idea was to leave three battalions, to be transformed from line

139 RG VIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 76, O stostavlenii vspoddanneishikh godovykh otchetov o deistviiakh Finliandskago Voennago Okruga za 1865 g. RG VIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 77, Godovoi otchet komanduiushchago voiskami za 1864 g.

140 Schauman, *Kuudelta vuosikymmeneltä*, vol. I, p. 105.

to infantry troops, to garrison Sveaborg, and one further battalion to station three companies in Viipuri and one company at Hamina; in either case, the Guards Battalion was to stay in Helsinki. The invalid and other costly detachments without fighting value were to be abolished.¹⁴¹ The troops were not, in fact, reduced to this minimum, because of the danger of enemy attack during the Polish rebellion, but the idea of rotation seems to have taken root, even if the rotation was not as frequent as originally planned.

The 22nd Division was replaced from Novgorod by the 23rd Division, with its 89th *Belomorskii*, 90th *Onezhskii*, 91st *Dvinskii* and 92nd *Pechorskii* regiments and 23rd Artillery brigade.

In 1866–67 the 89th and 92nd Regiments were in Helsinki with two battalions in villages, the 90th at Hamina, in Viipuri, at Kymenkartano, Kouvola, and Loviisa (Lovisa), the 91st at Sveaborg and Hämeenlinna, with two companies billeted in villages. To a certain degree, the regiments kept being moved to different regions, but by the end of the 1860s the 89th *Belomorskii* or White Sea infantry regiment was garrisoned at Hämeenlinna, the 90th *Onezhskii* or Onega Regiment in Viipuri, the 91st *Dvinskii* Regiment near Helsinki, and the 92nd *Pechorskii* Regiment in Turku, all quartered in barracks, only in Turku 'just tolerably'. The infantry was supported by the 23rd Artillery brigade with its rifled guns and 'flying artillery park' (i.e., mobile ammunition column) at Tuusula (Tusby); each of its four batteries had seven officers and 240 artillerymen. There were two regiments, the 8th and 53rd, of Don Cossacks. As before, the Cossacks were stationed in small detachments in various localities in the country.¹⁴²

The fortress artillery of Sveaborg also belonged to the military district of Finland. After the Crimean War, during the Miliutin reforms, a three-battalion fortress infantry regiment had been formed and existed until 1878. In 1886, the administration of fortresses was reorganized, in Sveaborg as in other fortresses of the Empire. The

141 Ob upraznenii Neishlottskei Invalidnoi Komandoi i primenenii Kouvol'skoi Invalidnoi Komandy do poloviny ravno ob upraznenii vo vsekh finliandskikh invalid. komand; o pereobrazovanii Finliandskikh Lineinykh batalionov v pekhotnykh batalionykh i upraznenii nekotorykh iz nikh vovse a ravno takzhe ob upraznenii Neishlottskego Plats-Adiutantskago Upravleniia 1861–1863. RGVA, fond 1019, opis' 1, delo 381.

142 Helsinki, Hämeenlinna, Turku, Kuopio, Mikkeli, Oulu, Tornio, Vaasa (Nikolaistad), Kivennapa, in 1866.

fortress commander had his staff, and subordinate artillery, engineer and intendent directorates (*upravlenie*) established. In 1889, a fortress infantry battalion was formed, and it was increased into a two-battalion fortress infantry regiment in 1900. Specialists in mine warfare had been organized in 1881, a mine detachment was established in 1886 and transformed into a company in 1891.¹⁴³ The artillery had eight-inch, twelve-pound and four-pound rifled guns and sixty-pound smooth-bore guns. The eight-inch guns were new and "difficult to install in position", probably because they were heavier than the previous models. In the fortress lived 3,215 people, of whom 667 belonged to the field troops mentioned above, and 476 were wives and children.¹⁴⁴ There was also a penal company at Sveaborg. Since 1874 the privates of the Russian army served five years and were no longer doomed to life-long service, and their women, if left at home, were not regarded as widows. Families of officers and non-commissioned officers often lived in garrisons or close to them.

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The fortress of Viipuri had been regarded as having lost its strategical importance after Swedish Finland had been conquered in 1808-09. Parts of the fortified walls were given over to the civilian town administration, while the old castle remained a military post. But, in 1819, it was realized that road (and later railway) communications from Finland to the Empire crossed the Bay of Viipuri and were easily approached from the sea. Then Viipuri was reclassified as a second-class fortress. During the following decades some measures were taken to modernize the fortress, but most of its five hundred guns were obsolete. In 1886, in addition to the fortress staff, artillery, engineer and intendent directorates (*upravlenie*) were established. In 1890 a mine company was formed from cadres transferred from Kronstadt, reflecting the growing importance of the Viipuri fortress and the technical development of that time. But with the main defence interest concentrated in reinforcing Sveaborg and the approaches to Kronstadt, really effective measures to strengthen Viipuri were taken only just before and during the Great War.¹⁴⁵

143 RGVIA, fond 16113 Sveaborgskoi krepost, introduction to the file.

144 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 85, Svedeniia o chisle nizhnikh chinov Sveaborgskago garnizona 21. II 1866. Including the number of women and children in the report is a rare exception, I have not found any such information concerning the other garrisons.

145 RGVIA, fond 13128 Vyborgskaia krepost' i podchinennye ei chasti i uchrezhdenii 1710-1918 gg.

The guns were served by an artillery regiment of four battalions in Viipuri as well as at Sveaborg. The training of the fortress infantry companies was disturbed by their heavy guard duties, and both the fortress troops and special local detachments suffered from the low level of their officers' education (*nishnago urovnia razvitiia ofitserov*). The Viipuri fortress had only two hundred shells for training, the Sveaborg none, because the artillery administration had not sent ammunition for the new guns in 1869.

The military district engineer office supervised fortification works in the fortresses, and the district intendent's office and medical office administered their respective spheres of activity. There were provisions magazines in several localities,¹⁴⁶ and local commandants¹⁴⁷ for local administration, and a district chief of gendarmes at Helsinki with gendarme posts in Helsinki, Turku and Viipuri.

The Guards battalion took part in the summer camp in Tsarskoe Selo, where they were transported by the Baltic fleet. This battalion lived in Helsinki in a spacious and clean barracks, had first-class officers and enjoyed efficient training, and was thereby distinguished from the rest of the army troops.

The other troops suffered from a lack of training facilities, because of which only minimal training could be given in winter, and firing practice could be started only when good weather set in. On the other hand, training detachments for non-commissioned officers worked successfully. Because of the heavy guard duty with which the infantry regiments had been saddled, only two regiments were free for summer training in camps.

Since tents and carriage and obtaining fields for manoeuvres were expensive, the military district established permanent camps. The troops were collected in summer camps at Parola, near Hämeenlinna, and at Lappeenranta.¹⁴⁸ The localities chosen were level fields, suitable for formal drill.

Of the Don Cossacks, the 8th Regiment was in a better shape than the 53rd. Acquiring sufficient fodder for the horses was always a

146 2nd class in Helsinki, at Sveaborg, Tuusula, in Viipuri, 3rd class at Hämeenlinna, in Turku, 4th class at Hamina, Lappeenranta, Kymenkartano (Kymmenegård), Loviisa, Tornio, Oulu (Uleåborg), Mikkeli, Kyrölä, and Kuopio.

147 Sveaborg, Helsinki, Viipuri, Turku, Hamina, Kymenkartano, Lappeenranta, Hämeenlinna, Vaasa (Nikolaistad), Tornio, and a military official (*nachal'nik*) at Tuusula (Tusby).

148 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis 1, delo 88, Ob uchrezhdenii postoiannykh lagerov.

problem, and co-operative *artels* of cavalry soldiers were formed to gather hay. The officers were said to be in financial difficulties in what were, for them, alien conditions in Finland.

The number of troops in the military district of Finland was reported to amount to 17,096 in 1867 and to 13,923 in 1869, of whom 9–13% were unfit for service.¹⁴⁹

The Governor-General's report indicates that there was no immediate military threat in sight, that the troops were not quite in fighting condition, and the fortresses even less so. It can also be seen that the army was trained for fair-weather and parade-ground conditions. It is true that an enemy landing was clearly impossible during wintertime, and that battle was expected to be joined on the southern coastal region, although even there open parade-ground terrain occurred only in a few places.

The first Finnish naval equipage or training battalion, reduced to a company-strength cadre, always belonged to the Baltic fleet. The second had been dissolved after the Crimean War ended.

There were only a little over one thousand Finns in active military service at this time, in the Guards battalion and in the naval cadre. After the review of 1863, the *indelta* soldiers were sent back to live on their crofts, until the ancient and totally obsolete system was abolished in 1867, which was a very difficult year for Finland because of climatic irregularities and consequent crop failure and the death from hunger of more than a hundred thousand people.

The Finnish economy soon revived after the bad years. This stimulated a start on essential reforms. Exports to the Russian market of textiles and machines, and to Western markets of wood products, as well as agricultural production for the slowly-growing towns created a sound basis for a Finnish national economy. Rokassovskii helped the Finns to establish their own monetary system independent of the shaky paper rouble.

In 1866 the Karakozov attempt on Alexander II's life marked an end of the reform period. In Finland a new governor general was appointed; Berg and Rokassovskii had favoured the Finnish movement, but now Count Adlerberg was more inclined towards the Swedish-speaking conservative bureaucratic elite. In tune with the

149 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 101, Vsepoddanneishii otchet komanduiushchago voiskami o sostoianii voisk i voennykh uchrezhdenii sего okruga za 1869 goda.

more conservative spirit reigning in St Peterburg, Adlerberg governed the autonomous country in harmony with the Minister State Secretary Alexander Armfelt, thus preventing any intervention or ideas of unification on the part of Russian ministers. Local political life revived when the Diet started sitting regularly. Political discussion led to a lively party strife and an increasing participation in politics by broader circles of the population. The Finnish 'constitution', granted by Alexander I in 1809 and confirmed by Nicholas I in 1825 and Alexander II in 1855, implied mainly Estate privileges. These were threatened by the mobilization of the Finnish-speaking lower classes by the *fennoman* nationalist movement, which was opposed by the established leading families, who also more or less successfully entered business life. Western ideas influenced Finnish art, literature and science direct, not through Stockholm or St Petersburg as they had done earlier. Germany was the main centre of importance for learning, France for the arts, and England for commerce. The growth of population (from one million in 1812 to two millions in 1870 and three millions in 1912), caused overpopulation and pauperization in the countryside, which was only slowly eased by industrialization, urbanization, and modernization.¹⁵⁰ This, in turn, brought with it new social problems in the 1880s.

The Finns remained strictly loyal subjects of their Emperor, but they did not feel that they were Russians. There existed no serious separatism in regard to the international position of the Grand Duchy, but again no wish to grow closer to Russia, which was increasingly regarded as 'our eastern neighbour'. Adlerberg's attempts to strengthen the position of Russians in Finnish society and Russian culture in Finland did not produce many results. In Helsinki, the Alexander Theatre, completed in 1879, was patronized mainly by the Russian officers and officials, and their sons went to the Alexander *gimnaziia* or senior secondary school, but no Finnish boys; nor did artillery salutes on Imperial festival days¹⁵¹ arouse much interest among the Finns.

150 Between the 1880s and the First World War about 300,000 people emigrated to America and were not included in the number of three million inhabitants in 1912.

151 Adlerberg to Miliutin 25. VIII/6. IX 1866 and the following correspondence. KKK, delo 52/1866, National Archives of Finland.

National Conflicts

NEW ENEMIES AND NEW IDEAS

The War of 1877–78 and its consequences

Miliutin was not allowed to carry out his reforms undisturbed. A new international crisis was due to Balkan problems. The local Ottoman administration opposed the Porte's feeble attempts at reforms in the peninsula, and the subject populations were dissatisfied with the greedy and ineffectual administration of their overlords, who in turn answered rebellions with massacres. European public opinion got somewhat irritated, and the Russian nationalists became interested in the fate of their Pan-Slavic brothers. General Cherniaev, the conqueror of Tashkent, and many other Russians joined the Serbs in 1876, but the Turkish army proved a more formidable opponent than the antiquated hordes of Central Asian emirates.

The Russian government was rather reluctant to intervene, because the imperial finances had still not recovered from the Crimean War, the major reorganization of the army was far from complete, nor was the Emperor in any bellicose mood. But the prestige of the regime had to be maintained and Russia had to safeguard its international position and interests in the Balkans. A light flotilla was sent to the Danube Delta, where it stayed for a while without any clear purpose.¹ By a great effort, Miliutin mobilized a few army corps in 1877² and, under the command of the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevich (the elder, the Emperor's brother), the troops crossed the Danube and

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- 1 The flotilla was commanded by the young Grand Dukes Konstantin Konstantinovich and Aleksei Aleksandrovich, the Emperor's nephew and son, so that they could be given St George crosses, as Miliutin sourly commented. *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota*, vol. I, p. 243.
 - 2 P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Voennye reformy 1860–1870 godov v Rossii*, pp. 336–40

marched through Rumania towards the Balkan mountains. The army was led with the usual incompetence and its provisioning was in a worse than normal state of chaos and corruption – for which Nicholas Nicholaevich was afterwards dismissed – but in the end the Turkish forts were taken, the mountain passes crossed, and numerous civilians massacred by both sides. In the negotiations at San Stefano, the Russian delegate, Count Ignat'ev, made the Turks submit to the loss of a Greater Bulgaria.³ Austria and Britain could not consent to the immoderate growth of Russian influence in the peninsula and on the Mediterranean and threatened war. Bismarck invited the trouble-makers to Berlin and Bulgaria was cut down to size and Russia's pretensions in the Balkans were deflated in the congress of 1878.

The danger of Western intervention in the Balkan war made it necessary once again to tighten up the defence organization in the North against an eventual British attack. In 1875–76, the Ministry of War, the Finnish Governor-General and their subordinate staffs planned that every infantry regiment in Finland should organize a reserve battalion with cadres and half the wartime numbers, i.e., 644 men – the war-time strength of a battalion was 1,322 men in all, or one thousand bayonets in the battle line. Each fortress battalion, at this time there were three of them at Sveaborg and one in Viipuri, numbered actually only 400–700 men, instead of the nominal wartime strength of 956 men. The fortress commandants reported that they did not have the necessary equipment for the mobilization of the wartime number of men, and could only acquire it if they received money to do so. Only the 19th Don Cossack regiment, with its headquarters in Turku and with 809 sabres plus thirty-seven non-combatants, was nearly up to its wartime strength of 816 sabres and forty-nine non-combatants.

Additional men to reinforce the fortress garrisons were to be mobilized from the infantry troops of the St Petersburg military district, from 22nd, 24th, and 37th Divisions for Sveaborg and from the 23rd Division in Finland for Viipuri.⁴

In 1876, when the conflict in the Balkans was growing ever more menacing, a committee was appointed by Imperial order under the chairmanship of Governor General Adlerberg to revise the defence

3 *Russko-turetskaia voina 1877–1878 gg.*

4 RGVA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 123 po mobilizatsii voisk i krepostnykh batalionakh i Donskom kazach'em polki 1875–1877.

plans of Finland.⁵

The committee first stated the principle that the Grand Duchy had to be defended because of its importance in protecting St Petersburg from the north-west.

The wartime nominal strength of the garrison in Finland amounted to 24,311 men and 597 horses.⁶ The committee stated that this force was insufficient for an effective defence of the country. Fortress troops had to be increased, and at least thirty-two battalions of field troops were necessary, reinforced with artillery and cavalry. Sveaborg needed twelve fortress and eight field battalions, Viipuri eight fortress and four field battalions. A battalion in each was necessary for Hamina, Kymenkartano (Kymmenegård), Turku, and Tammisaari. A reserve of eleven battalions was to be stationed at Hämeenlinna.⁷

No operations were expected to take place in the north, as had happened in 1808-09 and had been feared in 1854-56 or 1863. Only raids to entice the Russians to disperse their defences were expected, and the defenders were under strict instructions not to be falsely lured by any such raids. The south-west of Finland was without strategic importance to Russia, but for political reasons it could not be left totally denuded of troops. Turku, at least, had to be protected against enemy plundering, because of the Crichton shipyard and other industrial establishments.⁸

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5 O merakh, imeiushchikh byt' priniatym dlia oborona kraia. Ven sot asiak 173, p. 9 et seq., National Archives of Finland.

6 NOMINAL STRENGTH OF RUSSIAN TROOPS IN FINLAND

	non-commissioned officers	musicians	soldiers	non-combatants	in all	horses
23rd Inf div	480	112	4,800	195	5,587	510
23rd Art br	20		400	53	573	75
23rd Art park	10	3	188	11	212	12
Sveaborg and Viipuri fortress infantry						
	1,312	224	12,800	364	14,700	
Sveaborg and Viipuri fortress artillery						
	335	10	2,850	104	3,299	
totals	2,197	349	21,038	727	24,311	597

RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 41 o predostavlenii Voennomu Ministru soobrazhenii ha sluchai privedeniia voisk okruha na voennoe polozhenie 1875.

7 O merakh, imeiushchikh byt' priniatym dlia oborona kraia. Ven sot asiak 173, p. 18, National Archives of Finland.

8 Zapiska otnositelno znachenii Iugozapadnoi chasti Finliandii v sluchae voiny s morskoiu derzhavoiu. Ven sot asiak 173, p. 326 e.seq., National Archives of

Hankoniemi was the outermost point of Finland in the South-West, where the ice-bound period was shorter than anywhere else. With its good anchorage, it would have been a good base for a powerful Baltic fleet which might be constructed by Russia. But an effective defence of the peninsula would have necessitated extensive, expensive and prolonged fortification works. That was why it was considered best to leave it without any defence,⁹ with only the battalion at Tammissaari ready to slow down an enemy advance towards the interior.

The Kymijoki valley was even more important than before because of the railway bridge which had been constructed over the river.¹⁰ But considerations similar to those pertaining for Hanko were valid for the small fort of Kymenkartano at the mouth of the river. Thus the railway communication from Finland to the Empire had to be secured by field troops.¹¹

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In another memorandum, it was explained that during the Crimean War too many troops had been tied down to guard the Baltic coasts, instead of being sent to the theatre of war where they would have been more usefully engaged. To minimize the need for field troops it was necessary to modernize Viipuri and to fortify Sveaborg–Helsinki from the land side. Other towns exposed to bombardment from the sea could be left without garrisons, because trying to defend them would only have tied down too many troops. Guarding the coasts, it was maintained, was not a task for the army; it was the duty of the navy.¹²

Of course, it was a sound idea to employ the navy for coastal defence. But the Russian navy does not seem to have been up to its task throughout the whole century. Ships had been constructed to replace those destroyed during the Crimean War, but without any clear idea about their use. Occasionally, gunboats and monitors had been built for coastal defence, and at other times cruisers for a commercial war against the British merchant fleet. Some very odd ideas

Finland.

- 9 O merakh, imeiushchikh byt' priniatym dlia oborona kraia. Ven sot asiak 173, p. 9, National Archives of Finland.
- 10 Adlerberg to Major General Berens 11/23. VI 1878. Ven sot asiak 173, p. 266. National Archives of Finland.
- 11 O merakh, imeiushchikh byt' priniatym dlia oborona kraia. Ven sot asiak 173, p. 10, National Archives of Finland.
- 12 Zapiska ob oborone Finliandii, sostavil Gen. Maior Berens 1878. Ven sot asiak 202, pp. 209–10. National Archives of Finland.

materialized, like the round gunboats of Admiral Popov. Shipyards at St Petersburg and at the Black Sea ports had difficulties in following the progress of technology in the West.¹³

There really was no war plan for the navy in 1876–78. The main forces were kept at Kronstadt, and a detachment was at Sveaborg tied down as a floating battery to contribute with their artillery to the defence of the fortress. Only a coastal flotilla had a more active role in patrolling the eastern passages in the Gulf of Finland and in mining the approaches to them.¹⁴ Thus the navy was not of much use against eventual enemy landings or plundering raids in the south-west of Finland.

Work was started as the committee had directed. Even after the extensive works undertaken in 1854–55 and 1863–65 to strengthen the batteries of Sveaborg, much remained to be done. Arming the fortress with contemporary guns was expensive and proceeded slowly. The plans called for twenty-eight eleven-inch and seventy-one nine-inch guns, but there were only five and twenty-five of each calibre, and even a few of them remained unmounted.¹⁵ Similar problems existed everywhere in the Empire, whose borders were extensive and exposed to numerous enemies, whose industry was obsolete and economy undeveloped. The equipment of the army, the fortresses, and the navy always dragged behind the level of the more industrialized and richer Western rivals.¹⁶

Building sites for the landward defence of Sveaborg were bought on the neighbouring islands and on the mainland to the north of Helsinki.¹⁷ The fortress of Viipuri remained in a hopelessly obsolete and dilapidated condition. The augmented and more modern artillery would have necessitated a new circle of forts being constructed with a radius of six versts¹⁸ from the town, for which task no means existed.¹⁹

13 M. Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii k mirovoi voine na more*, pp. 23–24.

14 M. Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii k mirovoi voine na more*, p. 43.

15 Adlerberg to Miliutin 6. V 1878. Ven sot asiak 173, p. 199. National Archives of Finland.

16 P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Voennye reformy 1860–1870 godov v Rossii*, p. 139; P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Samoderzhavie i russkaia armii na rubezhe XIX–XX stoletii, 1881–1903*, p. 80.

17 O merakh, imeiushchikh byt' priniatym dlia oborona kraia. Ven sot asiak 173, p. 11, National Archives of Finland.

18 Six kilometres; a Russian verst = 1066 metres.

19 O merakh, imeiushchikh byt' priniatym dlia oborona kraia. Ven sot asiak 173, p. 13, National Archives of Finland.



"General Ramsay returning with his men from the Turkish war (1878). The boy in the centre is the future conductor of the Guards military band, Apostol. The boy was an orphan adopted and educated by Sergeant- Major Ekman (sitting in front of the boy), as recounted by his grandson Torsten Ekman, a journalist on the staff of *Hufvudstadsbladet*".
Photo: Museovirasto Neg 94352.

Finns did not much participate in the preparations for the defence of their country. The Finnish Guards battalion marched together with the Russian Imperial Guards to the Balkans. Many Finns adopted this distant war as Finland's own, because it was waged by their own Emperor and by their own battalion and in order to liberate Christians from the infidel Mahomedans. In small boys' games "Russians" and "Turks" – led by the heroic Osman Pasha – fought with fisticuffs. Finnish-born officers took part in the fighting, as they had done since the Russian intervention in the Greek War of Liberation and in all Russia's wars since then. The Finnish battalion took part in the conquest of Gornyi Dubniak, and marched over the Balkan mountains suffering from cold and hunger. In the summer of 1878, waiting for repatriation in their camp in Thrace, many men died from typhus and other typical campaign epidemics.²⁰ The war made obvious the

20 Two popular histories of the battalion's campaign: Tapio Hiisivaara, *Tuhannenpa*

dangers involved in such expeditions: "In the last days of the winter of 1878 we stood wondering at our sorrowfully reduced Guards marching back to town. I remember well those grey, worn-out troops, the rumble of steps, the ragged flags. The frightening picture remained forever in my mind."²¹ For their bravery, and for the repeatedly proved loyalty of the Finns towards their Emperor, the Guards Battalion was promoted from their status of Young Guards (since 1829) to the rank of Old Guards.

Tension had also risen rather high at home in the north. With the Russian army at the walls of Constantinople and the Royal Navy on the Marmara Sea, the danger of war seemed fairly close in the spring of 1878. In March 1878 the order was received in Finland to be prepared for mobilization, which intensified the preparations for defence.²²

To gather more men for defence, and to demonstrate Finnish loyalty towards the Emperor, some Finnish political leaders proposed recruiting four enlisted sharpshooter battalions, once again, though it was also pointed out that enlisted troops were usually recruited from the worst or most destitute elements and would thus not represent the Finnish nation with any honour. But the danger passed with the Berlin Congress, and no mobilization and no recruitment was necessary.²³

As a conclusion, in the summer of 1878, Governor-General Adlerberg summed up the idea of the defence of Finland in a few words: because it was impossible to defend the entire long coast, forces had to be concentrated on the most important points, i.e. Helsinki, Viipuri, and the railway line from Helsinki to St Petersburg.²⁴

verran poikia läksi...', Suomen kaarti Balkanin sodassa 1877–1878, (The Finnish Guards in the Balkan War), and: Keijo Kylävaara, *Balkanin santaa*. (The Balkan Sands, a collection diaries, letters and memoirs from the the Finnish Guards in the Balkan War).

21 Eva Mannerheim, cited by Jägerskiöld, *Nuori Mannerheim* (Young Mannerheim), pp. 40–41. In 1938 the Bulgarian King decorated 22 survivors of the battalion for their contribution to the liberation of his country: Talas, *Muistelmia itsenäisyssenaattorina ja lähettiläänä kymmenessä maassa*, p. 22. (Memoirs of T. as Senator and Diplomatic Envoy in Ten Countries).

22 Order of the Military District of Finland 4. III 1878. Ven sot asiak 173, p. 87, National Archives of Finland.

23 KKK, Delo 39/1878, National Archives of Finland, 'koskee neljän tarkk'ampujapataljoonan perustamista Suomeen tarpeen vaatiessa värväyksen avulla'.

24 Adlerberg to Major General Berens 11/23. VI 1878. Ven sot asiak 173, p. 266. National Archives of Finland.

National military service

Miliutin's great reform of the Imperial army was still not complete. The Minister of War argued that Russia needed more men in its army than could be recruited by the ancient system based on serfdom. On the western border there were two mighty enemies, Germany and Austria, and the Empire had long defenceless coasts and disloyal populations within its own borderlands. The problem was how to reduce the peacetime strength of the army and at the same time make possible a rapid increase in numbers in case of war.

At first, Miliutin increased the number of soldiers discharged before the completion of their period of service (*dosrochny otpusknykh*); the period, in law twenty-five years, had already been shortened to fifteen years, but the Minister started discharging soldiers even earlier and in greater numbers, in order to have a trained reserve of 750,000 men after seven or eight years.

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This was only a temporary solution; military service could not be left to be the duty of the lowest class only. Patriotism was a cause for all the nation. An important practical consideration was the training of reserve officers, which remained a problem until the upper-layers of society were included in the system.

Conservatives opposed such an all-class military service, as they opposed all Miliutin's reforms. National service had been established by the French in 1792 and the taint of revolution remained in the idea; and for many critics it was unthinkable that gentry youth should serve together with peasants' sons. But the victories of Prussia's national service army in 1864 against Denmark, in 1866 against Austria, and especially in 1870–71 over France, were an incontestable proof of the military effectiveness of the system; and Prussia was irreproachably conservative.

The opposition of the conservatives was broken down by the Emperor's order. General national service was established from 1 January 1874.

The army was never able to conscript the total annual cohort of twenty-year old men until the days of the First World War. Men were freed from military service on numerous grounds – being an only son, the breadwinner of a family, a younger brother of a conscript, and, of course, the medically unfit. The period of active service was five years, shorter for men with education, and for university students only one year (which made the system palatable for the upper classes). After concluding their active service, the men were sent home, but were liable to be called up in case of war. Untrained men, elderly

reservists and young boys over seventeen were counted as *opolchenie*, i.e. as militia or replacement troops, to be called to arms only by a special decision of the Emperor.

In time of peace, active army troops had about one half of their wartime numbers in service, and reserve and replacement units had only a small cadre in continuous service. Troops stationed close to the borders were kept at about two thirds of their war-time strength. They were recruited from the central parts of the Empire, because the national minorities were not trusted; only 25% of any detachment was allowed to consist of men from the local population. Cavalry detachments close to the borders were maintained at their complete wartime strength.

The Polish rebellion in 1863 and the war in the Balkans in 1875–78 complicated the reorganization of the army, but in 1880 the national military service system was working satisfactorily. The nominal wartime strength of the army was forty-eight divisions or 2,350,000 men including the supporting cavalry, artillery and sappers. The Cossacks were exempt from the general national service, because they continued their hereditary life-long military service.

Miliutin opposed all attempts to weaken the unity of the Empire; for example, he held the self-government of the Baltic German barons to be a dangerous separatism.²⁵ He wanted to modernize Russia and create out of the Romanov dynastic Empire a modern, rationally bureaucratic and centralized, nationally unified state. The aim of general military service was, in addition to making the army more effective, also to educate the various ethnic populations into a united imperial Russian nation.²⁶

However, Caucasian mountain tribes, Turkestan nomads, and Siberian native peoples went free "because of their low level of national development". According to the law of 1874, the inhabitants of Finland, too, were exempt "on the strength of the special governmental organization of the region".²⁷

25 *Dnevnik D.A. Miliutina 1873-1881*, vol. II, p. 14 (20. I 1876), p. 32 (22. III 1876).

26 *Novoi povorot v nashikh voennykh reformakh*. (Miliutin's notes from 1870). Gosudarstvennaia Ordena Lenina Biblioteka Imeni V.I. Lenina/Microfilm NL 218, pp. 90, 100, National Archives of Finland.

27 P.A. Zaionchkovski, *Voennye reformy 1860-1870h godov v Rossii*, pp. 50-54, 305, 328-31, 340-52; P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Samoderzhavie i russkaia armia na rubezhe XIX - XX stoletii, 1881-1903*, pp. 126, 131-32.

A national Finnish army

The transfer from Sweden to the Russian Empire brought with it for the Finns an essential lightening of the military burden, as we have seen above. The War of 1808–09 could not be compared with previous wars in destructiveness, and the war of 1854–55 even less so. Finnish peasants had been spared Russian compulsory recruitment, and the Finnish military contribution of enlisted men, materiel and money had been of small importance.²⁸ Finnish local histories usually pass over the years 1808–09 with the remark only that the local population in their everyday life did not notice the change in the sovereign power at all. Perhaps historians do not always realize how extraordinary this absence of upheaval in fact was. It certainly contributed to the economic development and national formation of the country during the following 110 years of Russian dominion.

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In time, people in Russia noticed the intolerable fact that Finns contributed very little to Imperial defence. For example, General Zalesov of the General Staff explained that Finns could not continue shirking their duties. Recruitment for military service and other military obligations, e.g. paying the costs for housing troops, had to be organized on an equal basis to that endured by the other subjects of the Emperor. Military service had to be more sensibly organized in order to put Finns in the position they owed to the Empire.²⁹

Even Finns started thinking that one Guards battalion and one naval equipage was an insignificant contribution from the border country to Imperial defence. The discussion started in Helsinki in the sixties; national service was regarded as a school for citizens, as a means of making a modern nation out of the population. For Finnish-born generals of the Imperial army it was only natural that the Finns should contribute more, because no self-respecting people could expect others to defend them.³⁰

In fact, an Imperial rescript on general national service for Finland had been issued on 31 December 1870/12 January 1871.³¹ A

28 As noted e.g. by Lundin, "Finland", p. 365.

29 Zapiska General-Maiora Zalesova. (s.l., s.a., but included in the file pertaining to the reform of military system in Finland). Ven sot asiak 202, National Archives of Finland.

30 C. O-B., *Kort öfversigt af Försvarskrafternas organisation i närvarande tid*, pp. 110–114.

31 Imperial rescript 31. XII 1870/12. I 1871; Istoricheskaja spravka ob Ustave o

committee chaired by General Indrenius was then appointed to prepare the national-service bill for the Diet.

Miliutin would have preferred to carry out the reform in Finland without the participation of the Finnish Diet; although Finland had its special administration he believed it could not have all the attributes of an independent country. His thinking was that the unity of the Empire was expressed by its monarch, by its foreign policy and by its military establishment. No part of the Empire could have a separate foreign or military policy. Or, if the Grand Duchy were to be allowed to make its own law of military service for its citizens, its military forces must be placed under the command of the Russian Ministry of War and of the local military district, and had to be identical to other Imperial troops in language of command, equipment, and training. Finnish troops had to be freely disposable anywhere in the Empire and in foreign campaigns, and the Emperor had to have the authority to appoint Russian officers to the Finnish forces.³²

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For Miliutin, Finland was part of the indivisible Russian Empire. It had no need for a military force of its own, because this could not be strong enough to defend the Grand Duchy alone; the defence of the border country would always remain the responsibility of the Imperial army.³³

Miliutin protested in vain. The Balkan rebellions and wars of 1875–78 prevented him from concentrating on the Finnish question. After all, the Finnish question was not of any great importance for Miliutin; he mentioned it only a couple of times in his diary, while for example the transfer of the military medical academy from his ministry to that of popular education was a quarrel which covered tens of pages in the diary.

The Minister of War, who favoured reforms, had lost part of his

voinskoi povinnosti Finliandii 1878 goda. Akter, handlingar och protokoll från Komitén under K.P. Pobedonostseffs' ordförande; Om behandlingen af Värnepligts-frågorna, på urtima landtagen 1899, p. 1. V. Procopén kokoelma, National Archives of Finland.

32 Notes by Miliutin 12. II 1871, referred to in: Doklad po glavnomu shtabu 29. VIII 1891 o perestroistve Ustava o voinskoi povinnosti v Finliandii i ob organizatsii s ikh upravleniiam. Akter, handlingar och... Procopén kokoelma, p. 1-, National Archives of Finland.

Borodkin, *Istoriia Finliandii; Vremia Imperatora Aleksandra II*, gives a similar summary of Miliutin's memoir.

33 Miliutin to Adlerberg 21. VIII 1876. VSV (Office of the Minister State Secretary) 1/1878, pp. 56–88, National Archives of Finland.

influence at court as Alexander II turned more conservative or fearful of revolution. In any case, Governor-General Adlerberg adopted the Finnish constitutional point of view, because he, a conservative, believed that concessions to Finnish self-government – carried on by the aristocratic Swedish-speaking bureaucrats whom Adlerberg favoured – were the best means of maintaining and strengthening their loyalty towards the Empire. Also the Finnish Minister State Secretary C.E.K. Stjernvall-Walleen enjoyed the complete confidence of Alexander II; in their youth they had been comrades-in-arms in the Imperial Guards.

Miliutin found comfort in the fact that Finns intended to revise their military law after ten years' time. Nevertheless, he was somewhat angered with the Finnish politicians, *finliandskie deiateli*, who had succeeded in carrying out their scheme, taking advantage of Russia's difficulties in the Balkan conflict.³⁴ That is why the Minister of War demonstratively kept a distance from Finnish affairs lest he should have to accept de facto what had happened.³⁵

Governor-General Adlerberg persuaded the Emperor to agree with the Finnish wish to comply with what was regarded in Finland as the constitutionally correct procedure.³⁶ Laws, taxes and military burdens had always been appropriated by the Swedish Diet, not by royal order, and the Finns regarded the ancient Swedish constitution as binding and confirmed by the Emperors in 1809, 1825, and 1855. The proposal of the Finnish committee received imperial sanction on 7 December 1876 and was thus made into a 'Most Gracious Proposal' from the Emperor to the Finnish Diet.³⁷

The military law was debated and adopted by the Diet of 1877–78 and signed by the Emperor on 6 December 1878.³⁸ According to the

34 *Dnevnik D. A. Miliutina 1873–1881*, vol. II, 1 1876.

35 *Dnevnik D. A. Miliutina 1873–1881*, vol. VI, 12. II 1881.

36 *Istoricheskaia spravka ob Ustave o voinskoi povinnosti Finliandii 1878 goda. Akter, handlingar och protokoll från Komitén under K.P. Pobedonostseffs ordförande; Om behandlingen af Värnepligts-frågorna, på urtima landtagen 1899, p. 2. V. Procopén kokoelma*, National Archives of Finland.

37 Seitkari, *Vuoden 1878 asevelvollisuuslain syntyvaiheet*, pp. 157, 257–60, 395. (The Origins of the National Service Law)

38 *Asevelvollisuuslaki Suomen Suuriruhtinaanmaassa, Suomenmaan Waltiosäätöjen hyväksymä 1877–1878 vuosien valtiopäivillä ja Hänen Keisarillisen Majesteettinsä Armossa vahvistama 6/18 päivänä Joulukuuta 1878. Annettu Helsingissä, 27. p:nä Joulukuuta w. 1878. Suomen Suuriruhtinaanmaan AsetusKokous, No 26, 1878.* (Official publication of laws and decrees for Finland).

new law, the Governor-General was to be the Commander-in-Chief of the Finnish army. The Minister of War, aided by the official concerned with Finnish affairs at the Ministry, was to submit purely military questions to the Emperor, while economic and legislative affairs concerning the army were to be handled by the Finnish Senate and submitted to the Emperor for decision by the Minister State Secretary. The Governor-General was to have a staff for the Finnish army, and under his orders there was a Commander of Finnish troops with the rights of a divisional commander and with a small staff of his own.³⁹ Major General, from 1886 Lieutenant General, Georg Edvard Ramsay, son of the grenadier General Anders Edvard Ramsay, mentioned earlier, commanded the Finnish army as long as it existed, from 1880 to 1901.

Russians were not to be admitted to serve as officers in the Finnish army, nor were the national service troops to be ordered to operate outside the borders of the Grand Duchy, excepting the Guards Battalion, which was recruited from volunteers among the national service soldiers. In the Imperial proposal, the task of the army was said to be to defend the realm, but the Diet substituted the word 'fatherland', because 'realm' (*valtakunta, riket*) might also mean the Empire and not the Grand Duchy only.

The substitution of 'fatherland' for 'realm' was based on the argument that a national service army could only be made to fight in wars whose importance for the interests of their native country was comprehensible even to the common people. In the opinion of the members of the Diet, the peoples of Russia and Finland were bound by strong friendship, but the holy feeling of patriotism could only cover the home country. Finland might with sympathy observe the work of spreading civilization among savage peoples, but the union of the country with Russia could not oblige the Finnish army to participate in such distant campaigns.⁴⁰ The Finnish parliamentarians were not interested in carrying the white man's burden.

Thus, every Finnish man between twenty-one and forty years of

39 Doklad po Glavnomu shtabu 22. V 1898; Istoriia sostavleniia i utverzheniia Finliandskago Ustava of voinskoi povinnosti. (signed by Kuropatkin). Akter, handlingar... Procopén kokoelma, p. 17. National Archives of Finland.

40 Asevelvollisuus-valiokunnan mietintö N:o 1, joka koskee Keisarillisen Majesteetin armollista esitystä yleisen asevelvollisuuden toimeenpanemisesta. Esit. N:o 40. Asiakirjat Valtiopäiviltä Helsingissä vuosina 1877-1878, Kolmas osa, Helsinki 1878, p. 5. (Protocols of the parliamentary committee for national service).

age was obliged to defend the throne and the home country. In annual call-ups 40–60% of the youths were exempted because of bad health (which was an indication the poverty of the country, and made the public and authorities aware of the necessity of improved sanitation, sick care and public health). Of the men found fit, about 1,800 or 20% were chosen by drawing lots to serve for three years in the regular army, and eight years in the reserve thereafter. The rest of the age-group were trained in reserve companies for three summers for ninety days in all.

It was also submitted to the Emperor that after ten years it might be necessary and useful to amend the law, if experience should bring out defects in the system.⁴¹

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The Finnish army consisted of eight national service battalions of five hundred men each in peacetime; wartime numbers would have amounted to one thousand rifles. Because the barracks of the ancient enlisted regiments of 1812–30 were occupied by Russian troops, new barracks for the new rifle battalions had to be constructed between 1881–85 at Vaasa, Oulu, Kuopio, Mikkeli, in Viipuri, Helsinki, Turku, and at Hämeenlinna. The ninth battalion was the Guards battalion, recruited from national service men who volunteered to serve in it; acceptance as a guardsman was generally regarded as a special honour. There were thirty-two reserve companies, scattered all around the country, where the reserve company cadres lived and the reservists trained. In wartime the reserve was to form eight battalions.⁴²

During the existence of the national Finnish troops from 1881–1901 about thirty-nine thousand men served in the regular rifle battalions and ninety-three thousand men received the reserve training.⁴³

41 Asevelvollisuus-Valiokunnan mietintö 1878 N:o 1, p. 94. (Memorandum of the Diet committee on national service).

42 Asevelvollisuuslaki 1878, luku II: Palvelus-ajasta vakinaisessa väessä ja reservissä, IV luku: Nostoväestä, V luku: Erinäisistä helpotuksista asevelvollisuuden suorittamisessa, XIX luku: Suomen sotaväestön kokoonpanosta ja ylläpidosta. (II: period of service, IV: militia, V: grounds for exemption from service, XIX: organization and costs); Keisarikunnan Majesteetin Esitys Säädyille, koskeva rahavarain osoittamista kustannusten suorittamisesta yleisen asevelvollisuuden toimeenpanemiseksi maassa. Asiakirjat Valtiopäiviltä 1877–78, N:o 41, liite III, s. 9. (Imperial proposal to the Diet for financing national service).

43 R. F., "Den finska militärens reserv 1883–1903"; C. F. W., "Kortfattad öfversikt af den värnepliktiga finska militärens utbildning under åren 1881–1901"; J. O. Hannula, "1800-luvun asevelvollinen armeija" (The National Service Army of the 19th Century).

A thorough and admirable work on the rifle battalions is: Screen, *The Finnish*

The Diet had discussed national infantry service, but the word 'infantry' was left out of the wording of the law in order not to prevent the Finnish army from having also artillery, cavalry, engineers and a coastal service.⁴⁴ But constructing barracks for the eight new battalions and thirty-two reserve companies proved more expensive than expected. Consequently, only a cavalry regiment, the Finnish Dragoon Regiment of eight hundred sabres, was established in 1889 and garrisoned at Lappeenranta. The even more expensive artillery was not even discussed.⁴⁵

The enlisted naval equipage was disbanded. A committee convened by the Senate, under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Commander Carl Tudeer, discussed having a national naval service of about four hundred men and a fleet of two gunboats, six torpedo boats and one auxiliary, but nothing came of the idea. The civilian pilot and lighthouse service employed a few officers of the dissolved equipage.⁴⁶

The nominal strength of the Finnish troops was 5,600 men, but, of course, the actual number varied greatly.

FINNISH UNITS IN JUNE 1898

Guards Battalion	505
1st Rifle Battalion	516
2nd	459
3rd	507
4th	508
5th	491
6th	484
7th	493
8th	538
Dragoon Regiment	803
total	5296 ⁴⁷

The rules about accepting Finns only into the army and of the army operating inside the Finnish borders only were explained as having

army, 1881-1901; training the rifle battalions.

44 Asevelvollisuus-Valiokunnan mietintö 1878 N:o 1, p. 11.

45 Delo o formirovanii kavaleriiskikh polkov finskikh voisk 1887. RG VIA, fond 29, opis' 15, delo 39.

46 Mattila, "Suomen laivastovoimien vaiheita ennen itsenäisyyden aikaa", pp. 42-43. (The Finnish Navy before Independence).

47 Vedomost' lichnago sostava finskikh voisk 1897. RG VIA, fond 1343, opis' 2, delo 135.

'the character of constitutional decrees'⁴⁸ according to the old Swedish Constitution of 1772 and 1789, which, the Finns maintained, were also Finland's Constitution. Changing these paragraphs demanded the exceptional procedure of a unanimous decision of all four Estates of the Diet, instead of the minimum majority of three to one. When the Emperor signed the national military-service law, he also confirmed the constitutional character of these paragraphs, according to the interpretation of Finnish political opinion.

It seems that by the end of the century the officers commanding the Finnish troops were living in relative isolation, socially and professionally, from their Russian colleagues,⁴⁹ which reflected the growing national consciousness and increasing political autonomy of the country. In inspections, the Finns behaved satisfactorily, and they were good marksmen, but their skill was destined never to be tested in real war.⁵⁰

Contrary to the earlier system of having ethnically Finnish troops as an organic part of the Imperial army, the debate in the Diet revealed the new view of Finland as a separate state in union with Russia, whose 'political independence' and 'striving to maintain its position among other nations' national military service was intended to guarantee.⁵¹

The hope was also expressed that the establishment of Finland's own military forces would result in the Russian military forces leaving the Grand Duchy, which would make possible a decrease in Finnish military expenditure for the housing of the Russian troops. It was admitted that at a few strategic points, for example at Sveaborg and in Viipuri, Russian troops might still be necessary, but the idea was that Finnish troops should be able to satisfy all garrisoning and guard duties in the country, and the necessity for the presence of Russian troops would correspondingly decrease.⁵²

48 Keisarillisen Majesteetin Armollinen Ilmoituskirja siitä, että useat §§ Suomen Suuriruhtinaanmaalle wahvistetussa asevelvollisuus-laissa owat perustuslain-säännöksinä pidettävät. Annettu Pietarissa 6/18 p:nä Joulukuuta 1878. Suomen Suuriruhtinaanmaan Asetus-Kokous, N:o 26, 1878 (Manifesto of the constitutional character of the paragraphs)

49 Screen, *The Finnish Army*, p. 72.

50 Screen, *The Finnish Army*, p. 159.

51 Asevelvollisuus-Valiokunnan mietintö 1878 N:o 1, p. 2.

52 Asevelvollisuus-Valiokunnan mietintö 1878, N:o 2, joka koskee Keisarillisen Majesteetin armollista esitystä rahavarain osoittamisesta kustannusten suorittamiseksi yleisen asevelvollisuuden toimeenpanemisesta maassa. Asiakirjat valtio-

In the discussions about national service, much bigger numbers had been mentioned. For example, Major General Christian Theodor Oker-Blom⁵³ had planned to form a full division of fifteen thousand men, with infantry, cavalry, artillery, and engineers. The Russian Ministry of War had also hoped for more soldiers, about twenty battalions.⁵⁴ But, always concerned with reducing the financial burden on the taxpayer, the Diet had reduced the army to only eight rifle battalions and one Guards battalion and later one Dragoon regiment. The members of the Diet understood that their proposal was rather modest, but in their 'most loyal' response to the Imperial proposal they comforted the Emperor: it was not probable that an enemy would attack Finland with large forces, because the geographical position of Finland made possible an attack only from the sea, and the sparse population, the backwardness of the culture, the arid land and the hard climate caused insurmountable difficulties for the supply and maintenance of an enemy army. That was why, they argued, it was possible to believe that the proposed army of nine battalions was sufficient, not only for any requirements of Finnish national defence, but also for the successful prevention of any military operations that might be attempted through Finland against the Russian Empire or its capital.⁵⁵

The Diet thus recognized Finland's role in Russian defence and was willing, in principle, to undertake the task of guaranteeing the security of St Petersburg from an attack from the north-west.

Finland was fast developing from a self-governing province into a separate national state, and its own army was one of the symbols of this development. The Finnish economy was growing, industry was being established to export wood products and paper, the population reached the number of two million in the 1870's, the towns were expanding, railways were being built, education was being organized for the lower classes, local government was set up to look after the ever growing pauper population, the popular press was emerging, and political life was being stimulated due to the regular sittings of the

päiviltä 1877–1878, Es. N:o 41, s. 3–4, 12–13 (committee statement concerning the military expenditure necessary for the national service in Finland).

53 Chief of Staff of the Russian troops in Finland in 1861, governor of the Viipuri province 1866–82, Senator for military affairs in 1882, member of the Committee for Finnish affairs in St Petersburg 1888–91, General in 1889.

54 Seitkari, *Vuoden 1878 asevelvollisuuslain syntyvaiheet*, p. 149.

55 Asevelvollisuus-Valiokunnan mietintö 1878, N:o 1, pp. 18–19.

Diet. Finnish-speaking people were awakening to demand their share of political power, which was opposed by the Swedish party – they, too, were Finns, although Swedish-speaking (the idea of ‘an Eastern Swedish nation’ never found much support either in Sweden or in Finland). Leo Mechelin, Professor of International Law in the University of Helsinki, and leader of the liberal opinion in the country, wrote a *Précis du droit publique du Grand-duché de Finlande*⁵⁶ where he expressed the Finnish belief that there existed a separate Finnish state, in union with the Russian Empire, and that the monarch, who was the autocratic Emperor of Russia, was also the constitutional Grand Duke of Finland. The Swedish-Norwegian Union and the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary were comparable political formations.

The national Finnish army and the ideas expressed in the debates in the Diet were later taken by chauvinists in Russia as a proof of the existence of separatism in Finland and were used as a pretext for an attempt to abolish Finnish autonomy. Then it was realized in Finland that the success in establishing the army may have been a Pyrrhic victory.⁵⁷ But, of course, the chauvinists might have found or invented other pretexts, as they did in border regions where neither separate army nor even autonomy existed.

Troop rotation

In 1882 the staff of the 23rd Division in Finland complained that during the division’s stay of many years in Finland it had been deprived of the possibility of taking part in summer camps and even in any military training, because it had to carry out unreasonably heavy guard duties, and because there were no proper camp sites and shooting ranges in the Grand Duchy.

This seemed to be the reason for an Imperial order in October 1882 to replace the 23rd Division in Finland by the 24th Division. The 23rd was transferred from Finland to the first army corps in the Baltic provinces, the 89th and 90th Regiments to Reval, the 91st to Iamburg, and the 92nd to Narva.

The exchange took much correspondence and probably even more work to carry out. The artillery brigades were changed too, but each

56 Mechelin, *Précis du droit publique du Grand-duché de Finlande*.

57 Seitkari, *Vuoden 1878 asevelvollisuuslain syntyvaiheet*, p. 405.

brigade left its guns to the other, in order to be spared the heavy transport of the materiel.⁵⁸

Finland was thus garrisoned with new regiments. A few years later, as the 24th Division had settled down, its headquarters staff was quartered in Helsinki, the 93rd Irkutsk Infantry Regiment of four battalions was at Hamina, Lappeenranta and Kymnlinna, the 94th Enisei Regiment in Viipuri, the 95th Krasnoiarsk Regiment in Helsinki, and the 96th Omsk Regiment in Turku (1 battalion) and at Hämeenlinna (2 battalions). The 24th Artillery Brigade was garrisoned in Helsinki and Viipuri, with artillery stores at Hämeenlinna and in Viipuri.⁵⁹

With the eight Finnish rifle battalions, the Governor-General, commander of the military district of Finland, had twenty-four battalions of infantry, one regiment of artillery and one dragoon regiment plus the Cossacks at his disposal for the defence of the Grand Duchy.

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War plans for armed peace

The Russian chain of border fortresses extended from the distant Asian and Caucasian forts to Kerch and Ochakov on the Black Sea coast, then to Kiev and the Polish fortresses on the Vistula. On the Baltic coast, there were fortresses at Dünamunde, Kronstadt and Sveaborg.⁶⁰ This catalogue shows Finland's importance in the general scheme of Russian defence in the 1870–80s, on the right wing of the front, securing the approaches from the Baltic Sea to the Imperial capital, St Petersburg.

In 1881 a twenty-year programme of naval construction was drawn up. In case of a war against Turkey, a land battle on the Caucasian front and a landing in the Bosphorus were planned, and the Black Sea fleet was strengthened in order to transport the troops for the landing and to protect the Bosphorus bridgehead. At times, a flotilla was maintained in the Mediterranean against the Turks.

The Baltic fleet was to protect the Russian coasts by offensive

58 RG VIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 156, O vzaimnoi smene 23 i 24 pekhotnykh divizii s ikh artilleriiam.

59 RG VIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 902, O dislokatsii voisk okruga v sluchae mobilizatsii po rospisaniu No 12, 13, 14.

60 P.A. Zaionchkovskii, *Voennye reformy 1860–1870 godov*, p. 62.

action on the open sea. The intention was to construct a sufficient number of armoured ships to ensure Russian supremacy over the combined German and Swedish navies. Against Britain only cruiser war was deemed possible.⁶¹

The danger of a landing from the Baltic Sea was not deemed serious, because the German navy was rather weak in the 1880s, and Russia seemed easily able to keep her lead on the sea. Sweden seemed even weaker than she had been in 1875–78.⁶²

At the beginning of the 1880's, the international situation seemed calm enough for a while, and the financial chaos caused by the war of 1877–78 made the Minister of Finance, Ivan Khristianovich Bunge, demand a reduction in military strength, and the naval programme, too, fell short of the hopes of the Admirals. Bunge and the Emperor understood that Russia, aspiring to a Great Power status, needed not only military and naval forces, but also sound finances. First, the defeat in Turkmenistan in 1879 and then the conquest of Geok Tepe by Skobelev's troops in 1881, followed by the advance of the army via Merv towards Herat in 1884–85 rendered Bunge's attempts void. After this, the Bulgarian imbroglio in 1885–86 definitely upset his financial policies and he left office. The programme was carried out at a slower tempo.⁶³

No direct consequences of these financial problems were seen in Finland, but they may in part explain why the military reform to be discussed later on was only undertaken in 1898 and not earlier. The differences between the military and financial points of view within the Russian government continued till the outbreak of the World War in 1914.⁶⁴

61 *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota*, vol. I, pp. 256–60.

62 Suni, "O meste Finliandii v voenno-strategicheskikh planakh tsarizma v 80-e gg. XIX v.", p. 109.

63 Capital ships were constructed in St Petersburg and in the Black Sea bases, while many smaller modern ships were ordered from Germany, Britain, and France. In Finland, Crichton in Turku and Sandvikens Skeppsdocka in Helsinki built a few torpedo craft and gunboats. Boats may have been named the *Vyborg*, *Abo*, *Sveaborg*, *Ekenes*, *Borgo*, *Rochensalm*, *Kotka*, *Seskar*, *Sestroretsk*, *Gogland*, *Finn* (sister ship of the *Emir Bukharskii*), without any relation to Finland or Finns, or to where they had been constructed. *Conway's all the world's fighting ships 1860–1905*, pp. 200–15.

64 Witte succeeded in balancing the finances, but the Far East adventure, which he opposed but was not able to prevent, led to his dismissal in 1903; the Japanese War again destroyed the finances of the Empire, which were only saved by massive French credits in 1906. The reorganization of the army under Vladimir

Britain, at earlier times Russia's teacher in naval matters and an ally in many wars, but then an increasingly bitter rival and enemy, was once more seen to be a serious rival in 1885 because of the quarrel about the Afghanistan borders. The general staff of the Russian army had to consider the defence of the Baltic coasts, because the traditional 'naval enemy' seemed to be about to threaten St Petersburg again. In British naval bases a "Particular Service Squadron" was speedily prepared for a campaign on the Baltic Sea,⁶⁵ while the mighty Russian navy as yet existed mainly on paper.

General Obruchev, the chief of the General Staff, supposed that the enemy might come to Finland either in order to draw Russian forces away from other fronts, or, more seriously, in order to take Finland and to threaten St Petersburg from there. A comforting fact was that in 1854-55 the enemy had not been able to cause any serious harm. It was true that it was difficult to prevent a surprise landing on the Finnish coast, but the interior of the country was easy to defend. In the worst case, Russian forces would be occupied in Central Asia or on the mainland front against Germany and Austria, while a naval enemy attacked from the Baltic Sea. Then the situation in Finland would be difficult, especially if the Swedes should join the enemy, because they knew the inhabitants, whose sympathy would also be on the invader's side. But Swedish participation was not very probable, nor could Germany attack Finland without the support of the naval Powers. Now there existed a railway connection between Finland and St Petersburg, which made possible a speedy strengthening of troops in Finland. Comforting also was the fact that the summer season was short and the enemy would be compelled to retreat by the approach of winter weather.⁶⁶

Sveaborg was the most important factor in the defence of Finland, because it was a big fortress and naval base. In Obruchev's opinion, the fortress was to be strengthened so that it would be able to fend

Aleksandrovich Sukhomlinov, to be discussed later, caused interminable quarrels with the Minister of Finances Vladimir Nikolaevich Kokovtsov, who was accused by the army of allowing insufficient funds for vital rearmament, but who contended that the army had been given more money than they knew how to spend; which was true to a certain degree, because Russian industry was unable to supply all that was ordered from them.

65 Watts, *Pictorial History of the Royal Navy*, vol. II, p. 78-79.

66 *Zapiska ob oborone Finliandii*, pp. 50-61. *Delo o merakh na sluchai voyny 1885*. Ven sot asiak 201, National Archives of Finland.

off even the most serious attack of the enemy. Helsinki had also to be secured, because it was politically important as the capital of the Grand Duchy, and in enemy hands it would paralyse Sveaborg's defence. The strategic position of the town was precarious on its peninsula, which could easily be cut off from the mainland by landings on the flanks. Because Helsinki and Sveaborg could not possibly be permanently fortified on the northern side, field troops would be responsible for the landward defence.

Viipuri at 280 versts and Turku at 210 versts from Helsinki were outside the defence area of Sveaborg. The fortifications of Viipuri were to be reinforced sufficiently to guarantee communications from the Grand Duchy to the Empire. Turku, the ancient capital and a commercially and industrial centre, would have been worth defending, but no force for its effective defence existed. Thus only small detachments could be left to guard Turku, as well as Ruotsinsalmi, Svartholma, Porvoo, Loviisa, Hamina, and the coasts, to comfort the population and perhaps prevent the small cruiser raids of the enemy. Cossack cavalry could be used for this purpose. The coast of the Gulf of Bothnia could be guarded by local Finnish detachments. Russian troops should not be sent there, because, isolated and at the distance of eight hundred versts from nearest support, they could only too easily become encircled, and would be powerless to prevent the local inhabitants from joining the enemy. The experience of 1854-55 showed that an eventual loss of an undefended town was of no permanent importance, while a weak defence only presented the enemy with an easy victory.

Obruchev estimated that he would need 55,000 men or sixty battalions of local garrison troops for the defence of St Petersburg, ten of the battalions in Sveaborg-Helsinki, three in Viipuri, and three in Turku. In addition, an army of field troops of 80,000 men was necessary between Viipuri and St Petersburg, a similar army in the region of Helsinki and Sveaborg, a detached army corps of 20,000 in Estonia, and 40,000 men in Courland. In all, the forces amounted to 220,000 men, "an immense number but vitally necessary" in Obruchev's words.⁶⁷

General Petr Semenovich Vannovskii, Miliutin's successor in the

67 Doklad 15. II 1885, Obruchev. O merakh na sluchai voine 1885. Ven sot asiak 201, National Archives of Finland.

War Ministry in 1881-98, explained this plan to the Emperor. He calculated that for the defence of the Baltic coasts four hundred battalions were necessary, supported by three hundred sotnias and seven hundred guns, which forces could be mobilized in the military districts of St Petersburg, Finland and Vilna. The coasts were to be observed by small detachments and the mass of troops would be concentrated on defending the most important objectives from the attacks of the enemy fleet: Kronstadt, Sveaborg, Viipuri, and Dünamunde. Small towns and even Libau, Windau, Baltischport, Reval, Turku and Nikolaistad would be left undefended.⁶⁸ Obruchev even thought about blowing up Riga and Reval in order not to let the enemy plunder them.⁶⁹

The 1885 crisis made the navy reconsider their construction programme. The planned armoured ships were far from completed and the construction of the heavy ships could not be speeded up. Thus the programme of 1881 was stopped for a while, and instead, construction of minelayers and torpedo craft for coastal defence was started.⁷⁰

While the army had planned to leave Libau undefended, the navy regarded it as a useful base for fleet operations. Fortifying access to the Gulf of Riga and the Moon Sound was considered too expensive and it was decided to leave the defence of these narrow waters to coastal flotillas. Riga and Reval were not necessary for the navy, and the sailors also agreed with the soldiers on the importance of strengthening Kronstadt, Sveaborg and Viipuri.⁷¹

Kronstadt was the main rear base, vital for repairing and equipping ships, as well as for training the crews, and was accordingly strengthened. But it was too far from the battle front, which is why a forward base was needed for naval operations. Sveaborg was believed to be too small for the planned new big ship fleet.

Fortifying Libau was again discussed in 1886. Now even the army found it a useful protection for their right flank, but a few generals, Aleksei Nikolaevich Kuropatkin among them, opposed the idea; they

68 Vsepoddanneishchii doklad 22. I 1885, Vannovskii, O merakh na sluchai voine 1885. Ven sot asiak 201, pp. 105-19. National Archives of Finland.

69 Doklad 15. II 1885, Obruchev. O merakh na sluchai voine 1885. Ven sot asiak 201, p. 33 National Archives of Finland.

70 Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii k mirovoi voine na more*, p. 30.

71 Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii k mirovoi voine na more*, p. 37.

thought that Libau was only fit for a base of an armoured open sea fleet, which was useless in the confined waters of the Baltic. They would have preferred fortifying the Moon Sound strongly enough to be a base for light coastal craft, but they were left in a minority. These discussions about a future naval base continued, in which a base on the Arctic Murmansk coast was also proposed, but the idea was set aside – for thirty years – and in 1890 Libau was chosen and fortification work was started there the next year. The strategic intention was to have the base close to the German coast in order to attack the German navy with overwhelming force. In 1894 it was renamed *Port Imperial Aleksandr III*.⁷²

These decisions were late for the crisis of 1885, of course. During the critical phase, the existing fleet was concentrated at Sveaborg to attack the flank of an eventual enemy fleet on its advance towards St. Petersburg. Another squadron waited at Kronstadt to defend the line Oranienbaum-Siestarjoki. Two cruisers with a few torpedo and mining craft sailed to the Gulf of Riga, preparing to operate either in the Baltic Sea or in the Gulf of Finland. For active war on the oceans, a couple clippers were armed as privateers.⁷³

The 1881 programme of naval construction had not been carried out and the rapid development of technology soon made even the few completed warships obsolete. In 1890, only two armoured ships were in service and two were being constructed; during the next few years more heavy ships were constructed and in 1895 there were eight armoured ships in service. But then the Baltic fleet had to start sending its newest ships to the Pacific squadron because the expansionist policy of Russia was mainly directed towards the Far East after the advance down the Balkans and in Central Asia had ceased.⁷⁴

German naval construction started in earnest in 1897, and thus the threat from the Baltic Sea grew again. In response, the Russian government drew up an increased naval programme, according to which thirty-five battleships and hundreds of lighter ships were to be constructed over twenty years and enter service between the years 1903–23. Because the necessary thousands of millions of roubles did not exist, a smaller programme of nine battleships to be ready between 1904–14 was substituted. Nevertheless, the most modern ships were

72 *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota*, vol. I, p. 307–08.

73 Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii k mirovoi voine na more*, pp. 24–36.

74 Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii k mirovoi voine na more*, pp. 24–36.

still being transferred to the Far East, of which policy the Emperor's cousin, the German Kaiser, thoroughly approved. The Russian Admirals comforted themselves with the hope that Germany's colonial adventures would draw her naval forces away from the Baltic.⁷⁵

General Fedor Logginovich Heiden, Governor-General of Finland 1881–97, considered Finland, as his predecessors had done, important as a glacis for the defence of St Petersburg. He believed that the naval Powers would only stage demonstrations on the coast in order to make Russia disperse her forces, but, in his opinion, the situation would grow dangerous if Sweden joined the enemy. The Russian troops had to be prepared to fend off landings on the southern coast and also an attack from the north through the interior towards the Karelian Isthmus.⁷⁶ Heiden thought that fortifying the towns of Tampere, Hämeenlinna, Hyvinkää (Hyvinge) and Riihimäki might be useful for cutting the routes into the interior of the country.⁷⁷

Finnish staff officers of the Finland Military District believed that the naval Powers would only blockade and bombard the Finnish coasts, but if Germany joined the war, the Baltic Sea would become a theatre of war of first-rate importance, and then even Sweden would probably join the war.⁷⁸ But Swedish bases were distant from Sveaborg and Helsinki, while Russian reinforcements from St Petersburg could be rapidly transported to fend off the invaders. And, after the short sailing season, the invaders would be cut off by the winter ice and the Russian forces would be left supreme. It was probable that even Swedish-speaking Finns would join the Russians after the enemy's violence was perceived.⁷⁹ The officers obviously meant the coastal population, which had opposed the British raids in 1854 but whose loyalty the Russian staffs, unable to discern between language and nationality, were apt to suspect.

After much discussion, much work was done, and hundreds of pages of accounts heaped up in the offices.⁸⁰ However, it seems that

75 Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii k mirovoi voine na more*, pp. 45–49, 51–53, 58, 62–63.

76 Finnish military district to the War Ministry 2. XII 1886. O merakh po oborone Finliandii 1886 g. Ven sot asiak 202, p. 85. National Archives of Finland.

77 Suni, "O meste Finliandii v voenno-strategicheskikh planakh tsarizma v 80-e gg. XIX v.", p. 107.

78 Oker-Blom, o zashchite Finliandii na sluchai obshcheevropeiskoi voiny. O merakh po oborone Finliandii 1885 g. Ven sot asiak 202, pp. 280–312.

79 Zapiska podpolkovnika Blafielda. O merakh po oborone Finliandii 1886 g. Ven sot asiak 202, pp. 280–312, National Archives of Finland.

even now neither Sveaborg nor Viipuri were adequately armed. In 1887 it was stated that Viipuri was not at all fit for defence, the landward front of Sveaborg was still defenceless, and the flanks of Helsinki remained outside the fortification system.⁸¹ The town was growing, the possibility of a landward attack was increasing, and with the advance of technology the range of the guns had extended from a few hundred yards to miles, and thus the outer line of defence was becoming more distant at a faster rate than the defence works themselves could be expanded.

In addition to the major military preparations, telephone and telegraph communications were constructed, and the navy planned to position sailors in the archipelago to communicate an early warning of the eventual approach of the enemy. Lighthouses and beacons were camouflaged, and the evacuation of the coastal villages was planned, in order to prevent the enemy from recruiting pilots from them. The Finnish Senate asked the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to warn shipowners of the danger of privateers.⁸²

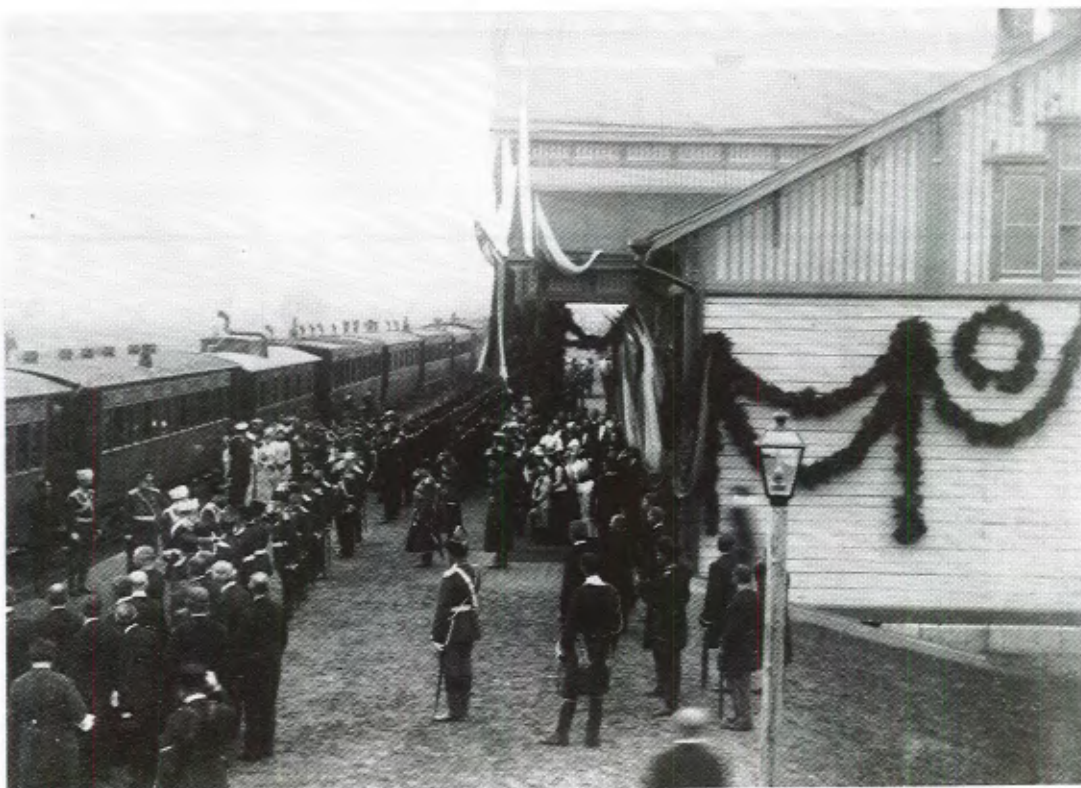
The plans of the years 1885–87 were not applied because, happily, no great war did break out. The plans, nevertheless, are of interest as they show the way of thinking of the military staffs concerned with defence, a varied picture in detail but constant in its main features. Finland was worth defending not because of its own importance, but because of its position as a shield for St Petersburg against the naval Powers.

Chauvinists in Russia were already writing of the danger of a non-Russian, separatist Finland, but it does not seem to have caused any worry for the military planners in 1885. Alexander III visited Finland in 1881 and 1885 to review his Finnish and Russian troops there. The Emperor was very much satisfied with the parades, thanked each of the Finnish battalion commanders and proposed a toast to his Finnish army. The magnificent reception of the Emperor by the Finns did not leave any doubt of their loyalty, in the words of Baron Budberg

80 Part of the accounts in: Ven sot asiak 202, National Archives of Finland.

81 Izvlechenie iz zakliucheniia komissii 1887 goda o podgotovka Baltiiskago poborezhia dlia deistvii flota. Ven sot asiak 7070, National Archives of Finland.

82 Governor-General to the Minister of War 2. XII 1886. O merakh po oborone Finliandii 1886 g. Ven sot asiak 202, National Archives of Finland; Governor-General to Minister State Secretary 10/22. IV 1885. O rasporiashenii po Finliandii na sluchai voyny s Anglieiu. KKK 16/1885, National Archives of Finland.



"The arrival of the Emperor at Lappeenranta (1885?)". Alexander III inspected the military camp at Lappeenranta in 1885 and 1891; he and his Empress, Maria Feodorovna, were impressed by the loyal enthusiasm of the local population. After 1870, the railway speeded up the transfer of troops from the Empire to the Grand Duchy when a military threat arose from the Baltic Sea.

Photo: Museovirasto Neg 147507.

who accompanied the Emperor in the review.⁸³ In the general staff's plans for a continental war, it was stated that the fact that the population in Armenia, Caucasia and Poland was disloyal had to be

83 Juva, *Suomen kansan aikakirjat*, vol. VIII, pp. 478–79 (A History of the Finnish people); Budberg to Sol'skii 2. IV 1906. O poriadka rasmotrenii i gudanii izdaniia uzakonenii obshchikh dlia Imperii i Finliandii. KKK, IV jaosto, 36/1906, National Archives of Finland.



"The Finnish Guards on manoeuvres at Lappeenranta in the presence of Alexander III in 1891. Lieutenant G. Brunow, Lieutenant N. Mexmontan, Major-General G. Gyllenberg." The camps acquired for military manoeuvres were large level areas and the tactics resembled the line formations of past centuries, although the Russian-style uniforms adopted in Alexander III's reign were a bit more practical than the previous reigns' Prussian models. Photo: Museovirasto Neg 98884.

taken into account in military planning.⁸⁴ No such lack of trust in the population was mentioned in the Baltic provinces nor in Finland at this time.

In 1886 staff officers from St Petersburg visited Finland and deplored the fact of the divided command of the Baltic coast caused by the existence of the two military districts of Finland and St Petersburg, but as yet no steps were taken to unite the two districts. The visit had political and propaganda consequences, however, as will be discussed later.

84 A.M. Zaionchkovskii, *Plany voyny*; pp. 28, 107.

The danger from Germany

In the War Ministry as reorganized by Miliutin, the general staff was a sub-department of the 'Main administration of the central staff'. General Heiden was its chief until he was appointed Finnish Governor-General in 1881, and, after him, General Obruchev was the main architect of the war plans.

After the Afghanistan crisis in 1885, there followed fresh complications in the Balkans. Bulgaria, liberated by the Russians in 1877, soon began to chafe under Russian tutelage, and without asking permission from St Petersburg in 1885 annexed Eastern Rumelia. A jealous Serbia then declared war and was soundly beaten so that Austria had to intervene in order to save Serbia. Alexander III suspected Austro-German influence behind these conflicts. Now it seemed that it was not only England but also the two German Empires that were threatening Russia's vital interests.

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In the war plans drawn up during the Afghanistan crisis in 1885, no thought was given to the problem of the main continental front should a land war have broken out simultaneously with the expected naval war. In the contemporary regular plans for mobilization and concentration against Germany and Austria only 185 battalions, 107 squadrons or sotnias, and 376 cannons would have been left to defend St Petersburg,⁸⁵ less than half the number considered necessary above. In the plan of 1887, the main army was positioned in Poland, supported by a southern army on the Ukrainian-Austrian border, and one army corps on the Black Sea coast. The right flank was to be covered by a northern army, commanded by Grand Duke Vladimir at Vilna, with Nikolai Ivanovich Bobrikov as his chief of staff. A German landing was expected on Courland, and hence Vladimir's army was comparatively strong, with four corps on the East Prussian border and one corps at Riga.

The approach to St Petersburg through the Gulf of Finland was to be defended by the detached 1st Army Corps, with its 23rd Division in Estonia and 37th in St Petersburg, and the 24th Division in Finland with the Finnish rifle battalions.

The following year, in 1888, two further army corps were added to the Russian army. Consequently, the field armies were strengthened,

85 A.M. Zaionchkovskii, *Plany voyny*, p. 43.

and the plan provided for two alternatives, each with the centre of gravity in Poland, one turned towards the south-west and the other to the north-west, according to whether the war was to be waged against Austria, or Germany, or both. Reserve troops were positioned behind the principal front either in the Ukraine or White Russia. The First Army Corps was still positioned to guard the Imperial capital against a naval attack from the Baltic Sea.

The Balkan crisis of 1885–87 passed, but the Alliance of the three Emperors was not renewed in 1887, and the secret Reinsurance Treaty lasted only three years to 1890. The Anglo-German exchange of Heligoland for Zanzibar seemed to bring together Russia's old rival and recently lost friend into the same alliance.

Instead, France and Russia, both of which felt humiliated and threatened by Germany, made a diplomatic agreement and a treaty of mutual defence between the years 1891–94. Alone, France or Russia were weaker than the Austro-German-Italian Triple Alliance, but together the Dual Alliance could withstand the rival force.

New military railways were constructed by French capital from the interior of Russia towards the German border, the numbers of Russian recruits and reservists grew, and the mobilization plan was improved, speeding up the mobilization and concentration as much as possible, in order to be able to start a war in conjunction with the French.

In the 1890's, the strategy and the plans of the Russian general staff remained unchanged in their general features. A Niemen army was to be positioned on the right flank, a strong Vistula army was either to defend Poland against the Germans or to attack the Austrians, a Bug army operated on the left flank in Poland, and a South-Western army was to attack from the Ukraine through Galitsia to Budapest and Vienna. One army corps guarded the Rumanian border because the kingdom had joined the Triple Alliance, and another army corps was always waiting at Odessa and Sevastopol for the chance of a landing at the Bosphorus. The French did not like the Russians dividing their forces facing their main enemy, Germany, but for the Russians Austria was the main enemy and the Balkans and the Turkish Straits the main goal.

Finland as a secondary theatre of war

The military district of Finland was still deemed a theatre of war of secondary importance. In 1891–92, the 24th Division was transferred back to its garrison in the military district of St Petersburg, to the

region of Pskov, in order to be ready to mobilize against the Germans on the main continental front in case of war.⁸⁶ According to the Karelian historian Leo Suni, the progress of naval construction and the Libau fortress as well as Sweden's weakness made possible the transfer of troops from the Baltic coast to the main front.⁸⁷ The transfer reflected the growing German menace on the land front.

Instead of the 24th Division, four reserve or cadre battalions were stationed in Finland, the *Izborskii*, the *Orovaiskii*, the *Volkhovskii* and the *Borovitskii* battalions, with additional reserve companies from the military district of Kazan. The Russian nationalist press protested against leaving the defence of the north-western front of St Petersburg to the Finnish battalions, supported only by second-rate reserve battalions. The absence of first-class troops was deemed fatal for Russian prestige in the border country and apt to slow down the Russification of the population.⁸⁸

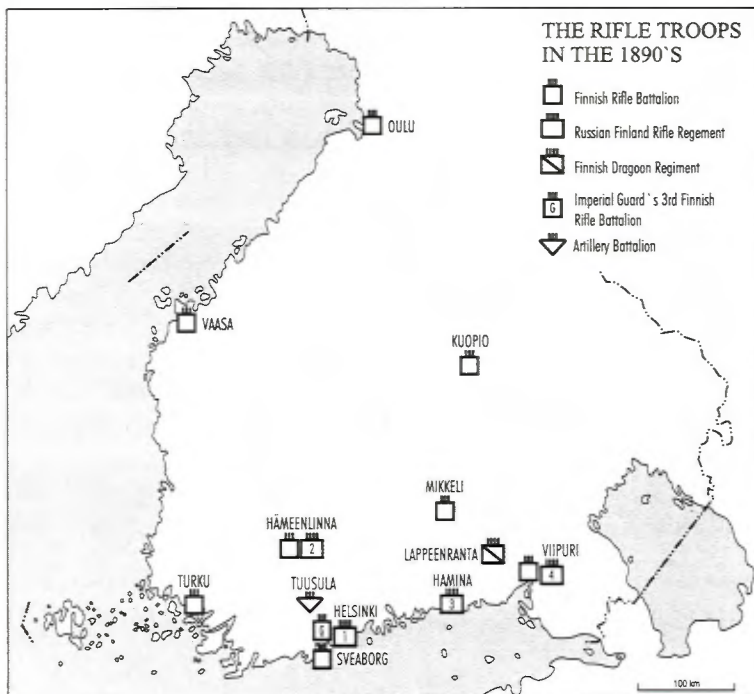
But, in fact, the intention of the War Ministry was to establish a new first-class rifle brigade in the Grand Duchy, with half wartime numbers in peacetime service. A war theatre of secondary importance does not mean that it was without any importance. The rifle troops were originally meant as sharpshooters, but by the end of the century there was no longer any tactical difference between them and the infantry. The rifle troops were only the first to be armed with the most modern weapons, and the rifle brigades consisted of four two-battalion regiments, instead of the two four-battalion regiments in the infantry; thus there was an equal number of battalions in both kinds of brigade.

The *Izborskii* cadre battalion was transformed into the First Finland Rifle Regiment of two battalions, with the regimental staff in Helsinki; the *Orovaiskii* battalion into the Second Regiment at Hämeenlinna; the *Volkhovskii* into the Third Regiment at Hamina; and the *Borovitskii* into the Fourth Regiment in Viipuri. The peace-time strength of each regiment was about 1,100 bayonets. The 24th Artillery Brigade, transferred to Pskov, had left two batteries, the 7th and 8th, in Finland,

86 RG VIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 217, O vyvode iz predelov okruga 24-i pekhotnoi divizii 1891; RG VIA, fond 1338, opis 1, delo 223, Perepiska s glavnym shtabom o vyvode iz predelov okruga 24-i pekhotnoi divizii 1892.

87 Suni, "O meste Finliandii v voenno-strategicheskikh planakh tsarizma v 80-e gg. XIX v.", p. 104-07.

88 *Moskovskii Vedomosti* 27. IX 1891.



The Rifle Troops in the 1890s

The Russian Rifle troops were garrisoned in the southern part of the Grand Duchy to fend off an enemy landing or to deny it access to the Imperial Capital, while the Finnish battalions were positioned in administrative centres of the counties (*guberniia, lääni, län* in Russian, Finnish and Swedish).

and these two batteries were doubled to form the Finland Artillery Regiment of four batteries, with its staff and one battery in Helsinki, two batteries at Tuusula, and one at Hämeenlinna. At times, the regiments in Hamina and Hämeenlinna sent half of their battalions to garrison Sveaborg.⁸⁹

With the eight Finnish rifle battalions and the eight Russian Finland rifle battalions, the Governor-General had at his disposal sixteen

⁸⁹ RGVA, fond 1338, opis 1, delo 223, O vyvode iz predelov okruga 24-i pekhotnoi divizii 1892, glavnyi shtab 5. I 1892, 5. II 1892. , RGVA, fond 1343, opis' 2, delo 135, Vedomost lichnago sostava finskikh voisk 1897.

battalions, about 4,500 Russians and 4,000 Finns. In addition, there was one regiment of Finnish dragoons, 800 sabres, one brigade of Russian Finland artillery, and the permanent fortress infantry, 885 at Sveaborg and 576 in Viipuri, fortress artillery, 1,770 at Sveaborg and 'more than' 1,500 in Viipuri, as well as mine companies, 208 men at Sveaborg and 99 in Viipuri. The Finnish desire to get rid of Russian troops in the country in consequence of the establishment of Finnish national troops was thus not fulfilled.

The full wartime strength of the field troops was 23,125 bayonets, 1,133 sabres, and thirty-two field cannons; and the total wartime numbers, with the fortress and non-combatant troops included, were 1,293 generals and officers, and 49,126 other ranks.

These numbers were far from sufficient, in the opinion of the staff of the military district of Finland. Every year they demanded more troops. In their opinion, the rifle brigade ought to have been doubled, and in addition an infantry division and a cavalry division (of three Cossack regiments together with the Finnish dragoons) was necessary. Artillery should also have been increased in proportion.

Here, even as on the main front, the slowness of mobilization caused much headache to the planners. An enemy landing could be expected by the end of the first week of war, but the reservists of the Russian Finland troops lived in distant Russia, (in St Petersburg and in Dorpat, but also in Pereiaslavl', Suzdal', Riazan', etc.), where their mobilization would take about ten or eleven days, after which they had to be transported to Finland, and would be ready to fight only after two or three weeks. Finnish troops could be mobilized in a week ready to march to their battle stations. The Lappeenranta Dragoon regiment would be ready on time, i.e. in three days.⁹⁰ Supply troops with their thousands of horses, and fortress detachments, with heavy materiel to be replenished, would take two to four weeks to reach full war-time strength.⁹¹

90 O mobilizatsii finskikh voisk. KKK 32/1889, National Archives of Finland.

91 Sostav i chislennost' voisk 1896, Ven sot asiak 7928 I; Sostav i chislennost' voisk 1897, Ven sot asiak 7982II; Sroki gotovnosti voisk dlia oborony 1896, Ven sot asiak 7929 I; Sroki gotovnosti voisk k oborone 1897, Ven sot asiak 7929 II; Sroki gotovnosti voisk dlia oborony 1898, Ven so asiak 7929 III; O sredotochenii voisk v otriady, po okonchanii mobilizatsii 1896, Ven sot. asiak 7934; Sostav i chislennost' voisk Okrug a po shtatami voennago vremeni. Ven sot asiak 7942; Gotovnost' voisk Finliandskago voennago Okrug a v vystuplenii v pokhod 1899, Ven sot asiak 7943 I; Gotovnost' voisk Finliandskago voennago Okrug a v

The fortresses were always in a deplorable state. Their garrisons were slow to mobilize and prepare for battle, and they were not safe against a sudden attack, although seaboard fortresses ought to have been in war-time state of preparedness all the time, because a naval attack could take place quite suddenly.

In spite of the repeated instructions to make improvements, Sveaborg remained in a wretched condition, its garrison was insufficient and the fortress was unable to fend off an enemy armed with modern naval artillery. The stone walls were obsolete and the parapets dilapidated, only half the nominal number of heavy guns had been received, and a few of them were in store without carriages, and there were no quick-firing guns at all. Sveaborg was able to defend the naval anchorage only against an improbable frontal attack from the open sea, while an attack against the always defenceless flanks at Lauttasaari and Laajasalo or the northward land front could easily paralyse the fortress and render the defence purposeless.⁹²

Viipuri was not prepared for battle either landwards or seawards; it did not deserve to be called a fortress. Several guns were only of historical value, obsolete works had no tactical unity or capacity for cross-fire, and neither ammunition stores nor barracks were protected against enemy fire.⁹³

The staff of the military district of Finland stated that two divisions or one army corps was necessary to fend off the enemy from the country, but with only half the force available, the staff had to try to guess the most probable direction of the attack and to position the tiny forces accordingly. Happily, the military district of St Petersburg was responsible for the coast from Viipuri to the Imperial capital; if the enemy had attempted a landing in the Viipuri district, he would have been counter-attacked from St Petersburg and from Helsinki. Thus Viipuri was in fact better protected than was apparent from its dilapidated condition.

The main body of field troops was to be stationed between Helsinki and Hyvinkää. A western vanguard would be positioned at the station

vystuplenie v pokhod 1900, Ven sot asiak 7943 II; Kratkoe kvartirnoe rospisanie voisk Finlandskago voennago okruga 1.9. 1899. Ven sot asiak 7947, National Archives of Finland.

92 Shtab kreposti Sveaborga 17. II/1. III 1897. Ven sot asiak 5959; O gotovnosti kreposti Sveaborga 1899. Ven sot asiak 7944, National Archives of Finland.

93 V shtabe Vyborgskoi kreposti 5/17. III 1897. Ven sot asiak 5959; o gotovnosti k oborone kreposti Vyborga. Ven sot asiak 7944, National Archives of Finland.

of Nummela, and Kouvola would be occupied by an eastern rearguard. A system of coastal guards was planned, and ships and trains were scheduled for the rapid transfer of troops.

By the end of the 1890s, summer manoeuvres were no longer merely camp parades. The defence plan was tried out in practice, for instance in 1899 a landing of an 'enemy', consisting of two Russian and three Finnish battalions under Major General Procopé, was supposed to have taken place at Hamina, against which another detachment tried to defend the railway station and bridges at Kouvola. The umpire group was commanded by Lieutenant General von Brincken, the successor of Bobrikov in the military district staff in St Petersburg. Staff manoeuvres were also held to test the plans, for example, in the summer of 1900, led by Major General Olkhovskii and Lieutenant General Glazov from the staff of the military district of Finland.

Lieutenant General Schauman (who had been officer responsible for Finnish military affairs in the Ministry of War and then Governor of Viipuri) was, in 1898, appointed Senator for Military Affairs, i.e. the Finnish Minister for War. He accepted the view that only the southern coastal belt in Finland could be thought of as a theatre of war, and that the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia was not worth defending. Sweden might attack the north-western coast, but in Schauman's opinion, Sweden would have nothing to gain from a war against Russia, and in any case Swedish forces were too small to have any importance.

Schauman also shared the view that a great power would not attack Finland in order to conquer some part of the country, but to attack St Petersburg. The defence of the Karelian Isthmus was the responsibility of the St Petersburg military district, and the troops in Finland should be responsible for Helsinki and Sveaborg only. No troops should be dispersed for the defence of minor localities.⁹⁴

Significantly, neither General Schauman nor the staff officers of the military district cited above, who were Finns, differed from the opinion of Russian planners in their strategic views about the defence of Finland.

Ten years earlier Vannovskii and Obruchev had planned the

94 Soobrazheniia otnositel'no oborony Finliandii. Sost. Gen. Maior Schauman. O sredotochenii... Ven sot asiak 7934, National Archives of Finland.

defence of the Imperial capital with considerable forces in the Baltic provinces and in Finland. But then the expected 'naval enemy' had been England, whose forces and attention were now engaged elsewhere, first in Fashoda in 1898 and then in the Boer War. For the Russian general staff, the principal enemies were now Austria and Germany, and the battle against them would be decided on the continental front. The Emperor's and his Admirals' interest was turning towards an advance in the Far East, to the open ocean through Vladivostok and Port Arthur. Thus the military district of Finland was left to carry on with its own resources alone, and its demands for reinforcements were left unheeded. The complacent assessment of the situation was soon to change, however.

The Russo-Finnish Conflict

THE REFORM OF FINNISH MILITARY SERVICE

Irritation and provocation

For ninety years, Finland's position in the Russian Empire had not caused any problems. Then, with the emergence of national ideas in Russia and in Finland, Finns started emphasizing their distinctiveness from Russia, while Russians began to resent the increasingly bolder Finnish "separatism". The Finnish idea of being loyal subjects of their own constitutional Grand Duke but not of the absolutist Russian Emperor was incomprehensible to the Russian chauvinists. It seemed an alien idea, and corruptive of the unity of the Empire: "*Oh voyez-vous, la Finlande, c'était un état dans un état, – cela ne va pas!*"¹

As early as 1863, Katkov complained that Finland had not contributed anything to imperial defence. Everybody knew that it was very cheap to live in Finland, which was supposed to be due to the good laws and well-ordered administration of the country. But the real reason was, in Katkov's opinion, that for fifty years taxation had not been increased in Finland, because no money had been spent on defence. The border country flourished at the expense of the Empire.²

Poland was the principal problem in 1863, and Katkov only mentioned Finland a few times as another example of the harmful consequences of too lenient a policy towards the national minorities. It was only in the 1880's that the Finnish question started to be discussed more thoroughly. The nationalist press deemed that the defence of St Petersburg could only be guaranteed if Finland were

1 A phrase by a Russian, heard in a train in France 24 March 1899. Kallas, *Päiväkirja vuosilta 1897–1906*, p. 160.

2 *Moskovskii Vedomosti* 4. VI 1863, 26. IX 1863.

totally dominated by the Imperial government. If the local population was disloyal, the Russian troops in the border country, isolated and far from home, would be in danger, surrounded by thousands of rebels. The Germans were known to expect that the Poles, the Armenians, and the Finns would join them in a future war against Russia. That was why Russia should not tolerate the autonomy of the border country. The Empire must be united and unanimous; Imperial patriotism must be substituted for the provincial myopia of the Poles, the Balts, and the Finns. Of course, any Finnish rebellion would be quelled, but it was better for all concerned to start the necessary unifying measures at once. If the Russians really wanted their Empire to be strong, great and mighty, they had to crush the separatist and treasonable schemes and utter the mighty words: Russia for the Russians!³

At first government and high society in St Petersburg did not adopt these populist slogans, which were contrary to the Imperial idea of many peoples united as a family under the common monarch. But, over time, nationalism gained an influence in government offices, parallel to the attempt to develop the Empire into a bureaucratically unified, rationally administered modern state. National singularities and Estate privileges were deemed as destructive of Imperial unity as were the novel ideas of parliamentary or democratic limitations on the Emperor's absolute power. The existence of a Finnish separate national service army seemed to be the culmination of a devious policy aiming at the complete autonomy of the border country. The disloyal subjects had achieved a separation from Russia and transformed a unity based on the right of conquest into a merely dynastic tie.

A few Finnish bureaucrats who knew Russia, for example Minister State Secretary Woldemar von Daehn,⁴ were worried at the direction in which opinion was developing. But disregarding warnings, many Finnish constitutionalist nationalists impatiently wanted to underline their separate nationhood: "In the end, we must speak out that we want to keep as distant from the Russians as possible".⁵

3 *Finliandskaia okraina v Rossii*, pp. 194, 224, 406–07, 553, 580. The discussion has been thoroughly studied by Sinkko, *Venäläis-suomalainen lehdistöpolemiikki 1890–1894*. (Russo-Finnish press polemics).

4 von Daehn was Minister State Secretary 1891–98, after Alexander Armfelt 1841–76, Stjernvall-Walleen 1876–81, Th. Bruun 1881–88, Casimir Ehrnrooth 1888–91.

5 Recorded by their opponent Meurman, *Muistelmia* (Memoirs of M.), vol. I, p. 218.

In international law the Grand Duchy was still regarded as an integral part of the Russian Empire. During the threatening conflict of 1885, the British ambassador in St Petersburg explained that in a war between Britain and Russia, Finland could not be spared because she contributed men, materiel and money to the Russian war effort.⁶ The French, after making the treaty of alliance with Russia, hoped that she was becoming more solid, and her problems in Poland, in the Baltic provinces and in Finland were to be solved by a firm policy.⁷ The German scientist Rudolph Virchow, who had studied Finnish craniology, stated to his Finnish students "you are all Russians".⁸

General Heiden, Governor-General of Finland from 1881–98, wanted to bring the Grand Duchy closer to the Empire. Alexander III approved the policy in principle, but did not want to provoke a constitutional conflict in the border country. Thus, only the Finnish post office was subordinated to the Russian Ministry of Communications, but the Finnish customs offices and monetary system, which had also been targeted, remained autonomous.

Military separatism discussed

The inspection of Finnish coastal defences by staff officers in 1886, mentioned above, was led by General Bobrikov, chief of staff of the St Petersburg military district. In his report he explained that, for example, Viipuri was unable to protect St Petersburg from the north or to support the naval defence of Kronstadt, because no concentrated plan existed for the defence of the Baltic coasts. He argued further that unified command was the principle of all military science. The defence of the Imperial capital was possible only if all military and naval forces in the region, both in Finland and in the Baltic Provinces, were commanded by the St Petersburg military district.

But, Bobrikov went on, the Finns, instead of striving for this unity, had transformed their provincial self-government into a political autonomy. Imperial consent to local legislation in Finland had resulted in a completely isolated military organization. Even the Finnish lighthouse and pilot organization served only Finnish interests, not the

6 Maude, *'Venäjän integraalinen osa'; Suomi brittiläisestä näkökulmasta 1856–1899*, (Finland from the British point of view), p. 105.

7 "Russie", *La Grande Encyclopedie*, vol. 28, p. 1171.

8 Sorry, I have lost the source.

Imperial navy.

In addition to the demand for centralizing the command structure, Bobrikov proposed that half the cost of the defence of the Baltic coasts ought to be paid by the Finns, because their security was guaranteed in conjunction with that of the Imperial capital. And twenty rifle battalions and four naval battalions should be demanded of the Grand Duchy instead of the nine existing battalions, and they must be assimilated into the Russian troops.⁹

Bobrikov clearly had sound military reasons for his complaints, though his accusations against the Finnish scheming for political autonomy were nearly identical with those of the chauvinist journalists. In time, it came to be seen that Bobrikov was not alone in his thinking, although he had to wait for a few years before being allowed to start his work for reform.¹⁰

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General Obruchev, the chief architect of the war plans had, as late as 1890, been of the opinion that no dramatic changes were necessary in the military organization in Finland. Miliutin had comforted himself with the knowledge that the Finnish law on national service was to be amended in ten years' time,¹¹ but, in the words of a Finnish historian, it was a foolish mistake to suppose that it would be amended to please the Russian military authorities.¹²

Meanwhile, Russo-Finnish polemics continued. Many Finns suspected that articles concerning the separate Finnish army in the chauvinist Russian press were inspired by the War Ministry.¹³

The following year, in 1891, the ten-year period was up. In a memorandum, the War Ministry repeated that a separate army was contrary to the principle of the unity of all Imperial military forces,

9 Otchet o polevoi poezdke ofitserov general'nogo shtaba S. Peterburgskago i Finliandskago voennykh okrugov v 1886 godu. Ven sot asiak 202, pp. 23-28, National Archives of Finland.

10 For an exhaustive study on Bobrikov, see: Polvinen, *Valtakunta ja rajamaa*, published also in English: Polvinen, *Imperial Borderland; Bobrikov and Attempted Russification of Finland, 1898-1904*.

11 Materialy po voennym deistviiam. Proekt. Manuscript page n.r 21, edinenie 6, fond 169, Gosudarstvennaja Ordena Lenina Biblioteka SSSR imeni V.I. Lenina/Microfilm NL 218, National Archives of Finland.

12 Palmén, "Asevelvollisuudesta", p. 178 (National Service).

13 For example: "Finliandskaia armia i eia osobennosti", *Moskovskiiia Vedomosti* 13. II 1890; "Istoricheskaia spravka ob izdanii Ustava o voinskoj povinnosti v Velikom Kniazhestve Finliandii", *Moskovskiiia Vedomosti* 10. III 1890; "Finskaia kavaleriia", *Moskovskiiia Vedomosti* 11. IX 1890; "Vopros ob ob'edinei finski armii s russkoii". *Moskovskiiia Vedomosti* 6. X 1890.

and that dubious paragraphs in the Finnish military law had been given a special constitutional status. The experience of ten years proved that Miliutin had been right in his opposition to the local military system.

In the opinion of the Ministry, the Finnish army had to be transformed into Russian troops, elated by a Russian spirit. Finnish soldiers had to take their military oath to the Emperor, not to any local 'constitution'. Improper paragraphs had to be removed from the military law, the period of service had to be equally long for Finns and Russians, and the system of reserve training abolished because it threatened to turn the Finns into a nation in arms. Finnish troops had to be freely available anywhere they were needed, their operations not restricted to Finland only.

The military burden was to be made fairer. Only nine Finns out of every thousand served in the army, while 35 out of 1,000 of Russians were recruited.¹⁴ The statistics were calculated many times and in various ways, and the results differed in detail, but they always showed that the burden had been much lighter on the Finns.

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Alexander III approved the principle of levelling up the military burden and uniting the military service of both countries on 2 November 1891.¹⁵

Two committees were appointed by the Main Staff to work out the details of the problem. The half-Finnish¹⁶ Russian Colonel Mikhail Borodkin from the Warsaw military district was ordered to come and to study the history of the military establishment in Finland. Borodkin acquired quite a good knowledge of this theme; in time, he produced many volumes of Finnish history, criticizing the Finnish separatist standpoint.¹⁷

In the committees, the Finnish point of view was represented by General Schauman and Colonel Blåfield, who stressed both the right of Finland to maintain an army of its own and the legislative authority

14 Doklad po glavnomu shtabu 29. VIII 1891 o peresmotre Ustava o voinskoi povinnosti v Finliandii i ob organizatsii voisk s ikh upravlениem, signed by Vannovskii. Akter, handlingar och... Procopé collection, National Archives of Finland.

15 A memorandum of the Main Staff 31. I 1902, historical review. Materialy o vvedenie v Finliandii novogo ustava o voinskoi povinnosti 1900-1901/Tsentrал'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Istoricheskii Arkhiv SSSR, fond 286/Microfilm NL 172, National Archives of Finland.

16 His father was a Russian captain in Bomarsund, his mother a Finn from Åland.

17 Thaden, "The Russian Government", p. 81; Borodkin's texts, see Bibliography.

of the Finnish Diet. They were always left in a minority by the Russian members.¹⁸

In 1893 a high-level meeting was held to give instructions to these committees. The upkeep of the Finnish military was to be paid for by the Finnish state, and the Senate was to have a role comparable to the Russian Ministry of Finance in military questions. Finnish troops were to be completely similar to Russian troops, but any increase of the number of the 5,600 Finns under arms seemed undesirable; instead, for levelling up the military burden, it was preferable to make Finns pay a financial contribution, the amount of which was to be calculated later.¹⁹

However, these discussions brought out the fact that Finnish legislation limited Russia's sovereign rights in the border country. Finnish opinion was that no Russian could have any power in Finland, the Emperor excepted, and even he only in his capacity of Finland's constitutional Grand Duke. The Imperial authorities admitted that the Finnish constitution gave the Finns the right to decide on their own taxation, but questions of Imperial defence were outside their competence.

The post-office reform, referred to above, alarmed the Finns, until Alexander III assured his Finnish subjects that he had no intention of infringing their constitution. The problem of legislation in matters of an all-Imperial interest was referred to yet another committee, chaired by the former Minister of Finance Nikolai Khristianovich Bunge. By these measures Alexander III demonstrated his ability to defend Imperial interests in Finland, as a response to chauvinist criticism, but he did not wish to harm the fiscal and commercial interests of his Finnish subjects for reasons of mere nationalist prestige.²⁰ Ordering

18 Otdel'noe mneniie predstavitelia finliandskoi administratsii, General-Leitenanta Shaumana; Ob"iasneniia, Komissiiia po peresmotru ustava o voinskoi povinnosti v Finliandii, o neobkhodimosti vydeleniia iz oznachennago ustava tekhn paragrafov, koim prisvoen kharakter osnovnykh zakonov; Otdel'noe mnenie General-Leitenanta Shaumana, Zakliuchenie, Vysochaishe uchrezhdennoi Komissii po peresmotru ustava o voinskoi povinnosti v Finliandii po uravneniiu tiagosti voinskoi v Finliandii s takoiu zhe v Imperii. Akter, Handlingar och... Procopé collection, National Archives of Finland.

19 Doklad po glavnomu shtabu 12. iunia 1893 goda po ob'edinenie finskikh voisk s prochimi voiskami Imperii. Ob"iasneniia..., Akter, handlingar och... Procopé collection, National Archives of Finland.

20 Schweizer, *Autonomie und Autokratie: Die Stellung des Grossfürstentums Finnland im russischen Reich 1863–1899*.

the committees to take up the Finnish question proved that it was taken seriously, but the conflict between Imperial prestige and local constitutionalism was put off for a while.

Heiden, too, concluded that the Finnish constitution should not be violated, because the consequence would be an unnecessary and unending quarrel. In his opinion, it was better to let Finland have a military law of its own.²¹ For Alexander III, the principal factor was the loyalty of his Finnish subjects; in the Finnish archipelago he was able to take summer cruises without police protection, and he was always received with enthusiasm by the local population. For the military security of St Petersburg, Finland's loyalty was of the first importance, and the Finnish political leaders took care to express their conviction that being good Finns made them good imperial subjects, too. But the inclination to look to the West for inspiration for their liberal ideas made the Swedish-speaking Finns seem suspicious in Russian eyes, because they stressed their reluctance to become Russians.

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Several Russian officers expressed their opinions in a brusque form. General Zolotarev, teacher of statistics in the General Staff Academy, said that only a little ink had been spilled when Finns had been given their rights, but plenty of Russian blood would be shed before Finland could be transformed back into a normal Russian province.²² Zolotarev stated that a few nationalities in the Empire were so unreliable that they had been freed from military service, but it was due to an amazing lack of wisdom that so many concessions had been made to conquered peoples, aliens who with all their efforts opposed the absolute power of the state. While 4.14% of Russians of working age served in the army, the percentage was 3.9–4.0 for Lithuanians and Poles, 2.83 for Jews, and 2.81 for other populations, but only 0.92% for Finns. Zolotarev demanded that when a primitive population developed enough to be fit for military service, their men had to be conscripted not into any local troops but into the Russian army. There they would be Russified and, after having completed their period of service, would in turn contribute to the Russification of their

21 Doklad po glavnomu shtabu 12 iyunia 1893 goda po ob"edinenie finskikh voisk s prochimi voiskami Imperii. Ob"iasneniia..., Akter, handlingar och... Procopé collection, National Archives of Finland.

22 Ignatius, *Sortovuosista itsenäisyyteen; muistelmia* (Memoirs o I.), p. 26. Ignatius studied in the Military Academy in 1896–99, and was later a general in the army of independent Finland.

home regions.²³

In 1895 Franz Seyn, a lieutenant colonel on the staff of the military district of Finland, led the summer manoeuvres. He found that the artillery was useless in the interior of the country where rocks, forests, and lakes made the finding, occupying, and guarding of positions problematic. A cavalry attack was also unthinkable, at least with anything bigger than one squadron. But the Finnish dragoons were able to achieve 'brilliant results' even in the thickets, and small infantry detachments, led with skill, were useful in a guerilla war even against superior numbers.²⁴ The report implied that the impenetrable interior of the country, where large-scale operations were supposed to be impossible,²⁵ might become dangerous for the Imperial army if Finns took arms against them. Another problem was noticed by General von Brincken: in the manoeuvres of 1899, vital information had been lost or retarded because Finnish troops did not know the Russian language.²⁶

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A report by the chief of the gendarme *upravlenie* or directorate responsible for political intelligence in Finland, for the year 1899 throws light on another aspect of the Finnish military problem. Officers of the Finnish army had adopted the separatist point of view, and there were so few Russian troops in the country that it was outright dangerous. But, in addition, the morale of the humble Russian riflemen suffered, not only in comparison with the splendidly armed and uniformed Finnish Guards Battalion, but also with the Finnish rifle battalions, who were always nicely turned out and lived in spacious barracks. The Russian garrisons of Sveaborg and Viipuri were in an exceptionally deplorable condition.²⁷

At the beginning of his reign, in 1894, Nicholas II had thought that there was no need for new legislation on the Finnish military question, he would decide it on his own authority.²⁸ But he was not able to

23 A.M. Zolotarev, "Materialy po voennoi statistike Rossii; Naselenie Rossii, kak istochnik komplektovaniia eia armii, — na osnovanii dannykh za pervoe desiatiletie otbyvaniia obshcheob"iazatel'noi voennoi povinnosti." *Voennyi Sbornik*, vol. V / 1889, pp. 98–143, vol. VI / 1889, pp. 325–59.

24 Seyn, "Podvizhnyi sbor voisk finliandskago voennago okruga v 1895 g."

25 Alftan, *Voennoe obozrenie finliandskago voennago okruga*.

26 RGVA, delo 1338, opis' 1, delo 291, otchet o podvizhnom sbore i bol'shom manevre voisk okruga 1899 goda, p. 48.

27 Political survey 1899, Nachal'nik Finliandskago Zhandarmskago Upravleniia. Ven sot asiak 14243, National Archives of Finland.

28 Materialy po delu o kodifikatsii finliandskikh osnovnykh zakonov a takzhe o

withstand the ever stronger nationalist current of opinion at court and in the high administration. Soon military reform, and with it the constitutional problem of Imperial military legislation for Finland, took on an increasing urgency. The committees of the War Ministry were revived in 1896. They repeated their opinion that leaving the military system to be legislated for by a local organ had caused disorder, and the Finnish Diet would certainly not correct the mistakes made. The only way out of the difficulty was through the normal procedure of Imperial legislation.

Nicholas II was neither a chauvinist nor a modernist. For him and his conservative circle, revolution was the main danger threatening the Empire. And revolution threatened not only from the violent Left, but even more dangerously from the liberal, constitutionalist current. Separatist strivings among the national minorities were also symptoms of the ever-present revolution. Nicholas and his mentor Konstantin Pobedonostsev believed that revolution was inspired by foreign agitators among the national elites, while the peasant masses remained loyal to the Tsar in the border countries as well as in Russia.²⁹

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Nicholas signed on 12 June 1897 his approval of the conclusions of the 1891 and 1893 committees for the reform of the Finnish military establishment. The military burden of the Finns, personal as well as monetary, was to be made equal to that of the Russians.³⁰

The reform carried out

The Finnish military question was given more urgency by General Kuropatkin, who succeeded the decrepit Vannovskii in the War Ministry in 1898. Kuropatkin joined the chorus which demanded "Russia for the Russians!"³¹ On Kuropatkin's proposal, Nicholas II appointed Bobrikov to the post of Governor-General in Finland to carry out the military reform. A civilian official, Deutrich, was appointed Deputy Governor-General, and in military affairs he was

poriadke izdanii i obnarodovanii zakonov obshchikh dlia vsei imperii s vklucheniem Velikago Kniazhestava Finliandskago, 1891–1898. KKK 1908, II jaosto, akti 51, p. 100, National Archives of Finland.

29 Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People*.

30 Ministerstvo Voennoe, Glavnyi Shtab 31. I 1900; Materialy o vvedenie v Finliandii novogo ustava o voinskoi povinnosti 1900–1901. TsGVIA SSSR/ Microfilm NL 172, National Archives of Finland.

31 Kuropatkin, *Zadachi russkoi armii*. Rossiia dlia russkikh.

assisted first by Lieutenant General S.O. Goncharov, then N.N. Shipov and, after he proved too delicate for the task, General N.M. Turbin. Lieutenant Colonel Seyn was appointed chief of the Governor-General's Chancery, with special responsibility for military and security matters. Seyn made a thorough study of the Finnish military problem and restated the conclusions of the Moscow nationalists and of the previous committees, and the opinions of the Minister of War.³²

Kuropatkin pointed out that for decades there had existed a comradeship-in-arms with the Finnish officers, but everything had changed during the last twenty years when the idea spread in Finland that a separate army and Finnish state existed.³³ The Finnish acting Minister State Secretary, General Victor Procopé³⁴ answered that for the participants in the battles mentioned by Kuropatkin, the recent hatred and suspicion of the representatives of the Russian army was incomprehensible and insulting.³⁵ Public opinion in Finland did not comprehend the reasons for the military reform; they believed that the hatred had been instigated by the chauvinist *Fennophagi* in the Empire.³⁶ Of course, Kuropatkin and his aides did not change their views.

To ease the threatening armaments race, Nicholas II proposed disarmament to the Powers in 1898. Kuropatkin supported the initiative, because he knew that Russia could not afford to compete with Austria and Germany, which were re-equipping their artillery

32 Seyn was commanded to read his study to various groups and clubs of officers, and it was also printed in *Russkii Invalid*, the newspaper of the War Ministry: Voinskaia povinnostiu v Finliandii po sravneniiu s obshcheobiazatelnoi voinskoiu povinnostiu v Imperii; soobshchenie general'nago shtaba podpolkovnika Zeina, sostavlennoe po ofitsialnym istochnikam i pročitannoe 10-go i 11-go dekabria v Gel'singforskom voennym sobranii 1898 g. KKK 1906, 2. dept., n:o 1-1, National Archives of Finland; *Russkii Invalid* n:o 275, 276, 278/1898, 2, 5/1899; and also as a brochure in Finnish: *Suomen asevelvollisuus verrattuna keisarikunnan yleiseen asevelvollisuuteen*; esitelmä jonka piti yleisesikunnan överstiluutnantti Seyn, suomennos venäjän kielestä, Helsingissä 1899.

33 Kuropatkin to Procopé, cited in "Iz moikh vospominaniakh", p. 38, Procopé collection, National Archives of Finland.

34 Chief of the Finnish Guards battalion in the War of 1877, governor of Vaasa in 1884, Senator for military affairs in 1888, deputy Minister State Secretary 1891, acting Minister State Secretary 1898-99, General of Infantry in 1900.

35 Procopé to Kuropatkin, cited in "Iz moikh vospominaniakh", p. 41, Procopé collection, National Archives of Finland.

36 *Haminan Sanomat* n:o 64, 14. VIII 1894. KKK 61/1893, National Archives of Finland (a newspaper cutting of Hamina News, annexed to the archive of the governor general).

with expensive quick-firing and heavy guns. The proposal was privately ridiculed by all responsible statesmen, but the Tsar could not be snubbed, and an international disarmament conference was convened at the Hague in 1899.

Levelling up the military burden in Finland meant increasing the number of troops, and the measure had to be introduced before the Conference began. Above, we have seen how the number of troops in Finland had been reduced from twenty-four infantry battalions to eight Finnish and eight Russian rifle battalions, too few for effectively securing the border country.

Kuropatkin adopted Miliutin's and Vannovskii's views and maintained that Alexander II and Alexander III had already accepted the reform in Finland. Nicholas II agreed that no further reasoning was necessary, because the principle of unification had been approved by his two predecessors.³⁷

Kuropatkin differed from the committees in his demand that in addition to a financial contribution, the personal military burden in Finland was to be raised equal to that in Russia. Conscripts who were not needed for the Finnish battalions were to be taken into Russian units either in Finland or in the neighbouring Russian provinces. The Minister hoped that serving in Russian units would draw the two peoples closer to each other, make easier the learning of the Russian language, which until then had been totally incomprehensible to most Finns, and would develop the spirit of one unified army among them.

Kuropatkin would have preferred not to give the proposal to the Finnish Diet, because he assumed they would not adopt it, and in any case it was inconceivable that important questions of Imperial defence should be decided by a provincial meeting. Finland's real interests could not possibly be hurt if strategic questions were decided in St Petersburg, because it was the Imperial army that protected Finland, not the Finnish mini-army.³⁸

In June 1898 Nicholas II ordered his ministers to tarry no longer with the project for Finnish national service.³⁹ An extraordinary Diet

37 An untitled memorandum, signed by Kuropatkin 29. VIII 1898, Akter, Handlingar och... Procopé collection, National Archives of Finland.

38 Doklad po glavnomu shtabu 22. V 1898. Istoriia sostavleniia i utverzheniia Finlândskago Ustava o voïnskoi povinnosti, p. 24–25. Akter, Handlingar. och... Procopé collection, National Archives of Finland.

39 Kuropatkin to Governor-General Bobrikov 8. VII 1898, KKK 1893, delo 69, National Archives of Finland.

was ordered to convene the following January, but only to give a statement or opinion on how the proposed levelling up of the military burden could best be adjusted to Finnish circumstances. The principle of the reform was not to be discussed.⁴⁰ It was planned that, instead of the Finnish military commissariat, thirteen Russian conscription districts were to be organized in Finland, to examine the tens of thousands of Finnish youths of military age.⁴¹

The constitutional conflict

The Diet convened but the members of the Estates decided to ignore the Imperial proposal, because it had been made unconstitutionally, through the Minister of War, not through the Minister State Secretary and the Finnish Senate, the constitutionally competent instances.⁴²

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In order not to take a merely negative attitude, the Diet prepared on their own initiative a new proposal for a military law which, in their opinion, would correspond to the military interests set forth in the Imperial proposal. Twenty battalions and increased military taxes were too heavy a burden, in their opinion, but the Diet were willing to increase the existing number from 5,600 to 12,500 men. But, ignoring the essential point of the imperial reform proposal, the Diet insisted that the Finnish army was not to be sent outside the borders of the Grand Duchy, and that Russians should not be admitted to officer vacancies. To counter-balance this refusal, the Diet promised

40 Zhurnal Vysochaishe uchrezhdennago Osobago Soveshchaniia po sostavleniiu redaktsii Vysochaishago predlozheniia chrezvychainomu seimu zemskikh chinov Velikago Kniazhestva Finliandskago, sozyvaemago v Gel'singforshe na 7-e Ianvaria 1899 dlia razmotreniia Ustava o voinskoi povinnosti; Zasedaniia 2-go Avgusta 1898 goda. Akter, Handlingar och... Procopé collection, National Archives of Finland.

41	1. Uusimaa	2,274	conscripts	8. Kuopio I	1,523
	2. Turku I	1,502		9. Kuopio II	1,276
	3. Turku II	2,094		10. Mikkeli	1,569
	4. Vaasa I	1,797		11. Hämeenlinna	2,537
	5. Vaasa II	1,771		12. Viipuri I	1,969
	6. Oulu I	983		13. Viipuri II	1,370
	7. Oulu II	1,070			

RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 712, soobrazheniia ob uprazhdenii Finskikh voisk 1901.

42 Suomen Suuriruhtinaanmaan Valtiosäätyjen päätös, joka tehtiin ja annettiin väliaikaisilla valtiopäivillä Helsingissä 29. päivänä Toukokuuta 1899. Asiakirjat väliaikaisilta valtiopäiviltä Helsingissä 1899. (Decision by the Finnish Diet).

to give up the right of Finns to serve in the Empire. The concessions were made on condition that the procedure of the constitutionally-confirmed right of the Finnish people to legislate on their military service and taxation would be respected.

The aim of the War Ministry was to annul the constitutional character of the Finnish military law;⁴³ the numbers to be recruited and the sums to be paid were to depend on Imperial needs, not on the deliberations of local institutions. The Diet only needed to procure the necessary monies, not to criticize military policy.⁴⁴

Thus the military question was definitely caught up with the basic question of Finnish autonomy: who had the authority to legislate for Finland in matters which had an all-Imperial importance. On Kuropatkin's proposal, Nicholas ordered a manifesto to be composed to clear up the problem. It was made public on 3/15 February 1899 and stressed that, in questions of Imperial interest, the opinion of the Finnish Senate and Diet would be asked, after which the matter would be discussed and decided in St Petersburg by the Imperial Council, and then definitely sanctioned by the Emperor.

This February Manifesto, as it was thereafter called in Finland, was quite understandable from the Imperial point of view, but was regarded in Finland as a *coup d'état* and as a breach of the Imperial oath to respect Finland's constitution. The 'perjurer Emperor's' portrait was removed from the walls of Finnish homes.

Next, the matter was taken up in the Imperial Council in March-May 1901. The conservative councillors disliked many of the proposals of the War Ministry, for example those concerning the number of Finns to be recruited and their recruiting into Russian units, or the taking of Finnish troops outside the Grand Duchy. The Minister of Finance, Witte, did not believe that the Finns were separatists, and for him the doctrine of an autonomous Finnish state did not prove any lack of loyalty towards Russia, because the existence of such a state had been confirmed by all the previous Emperors. The expenditure on the Russian troops in Finland did not imply any loss

43 Seyn, *Suomen asevelvollisuus verrattuna keisarikunnan yleiseen asevelvollisuteen*, pp. 17-22.

44 Ob"iasneniia, Komissiia po peresmotru ustava o voinskoi povinnosti v Finliandii, o neobkhodimosti vydeleniia iz oznachennago ustava tekh paragrafov, koim prisvoenny kharakter osnovnykh zakonov. Izvlechenie iz zhurnala komissii ot 28 Marta 1897 goda. Akter, Handlingar och... Procopé collection, National Archives of Finland.

for Russia because the money was spent on the defence of the Empire, not only of the border country. Nor was it correct to say, in his opinion, that Finland flourished at Russia's expense; on the contrary, Finland was the one and only border country where no expenditure had ever been necessary for quelling rebellion. Finnish self-government did not harm Russia but saved her from unnecessary expenditure and trouble in administering local affairs. Nor was force the right means for assimilating Finland; it was better to make the Finns understand their own interest in assimilation. And if the Finns should really be rebellious, was it sensible to train them in the use of arms? If forced to serve in Russian units, the Finns would be definitely alienated from the Empire.⁴⁵

Nicholas II ignored conservative opinion and even the advice of his mother, the Dowager Empress Maria Fedorovna.⁴⁶ To his consort, Empress Alexandra Fedorovna, he said he was sorry, but he had to support his military advisers in Russia's interest.

Because the discussion in the Imperial Council did not run satisfactorily, a secret committee⁴⁷ in the War Ministry replaced the original proposal by a new Imperial decree dissolving the Finnish national-service rifle battalions and the reserve-training companies. The procedure was not what had been laid down in the manifesto of 15 February 1899, but, of course, it was completely in accordance with the principle of absolutism. The new law was published on 12 July 1901. For the needs of the Guards Battalion and the Dragoon Regiment, only a few hundred men were to be conscripted annually. All the rest of the recruits were to be taken by Russian units in Finland or in the neighbouring *gubernii* of the St. Petersburg military district.

Soon the officers of the Dragoon Regiment in Lappeenranta proved to be dangerously constitutionally minded – they resigned in protest against a public reprimand of their commander, Colonel Schauman, by Bobrikov – and in consequence, or on this pretext, even this regiment was dissolved. For a while, Bobrikov planned to let the

45 Witte's statement 14. I 1901 on the national service proposal of the War Ministry. *Materialy o vvedenie v Finliandii novogo ustava o voinskoi povinnosti 1900-1901*. TsGVIA SSSR/Microfilm NL 172, National Archives of Finland.

46 Torvinen, *Suomen puolustusta Kööpenhaminassa; Ina Langen salainen toiminta Danielson-Kalmarin astamiehenä 1890-luvun alussa*. (Defence of Finland in Copenhagen).

47 Osoboe soveshanie 9 iyunia 1901, attended by Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich, P.S. Vannovskii, N.I. Bobrikov, A.N. Kuropatkin, D.S. Sipiagin, V.K. von Plehwe.

Hamina Cadet Corps survive, only transforming it into a school where Russian officer aspirants could be taught local languages and customs, in order to be employed later in the Russified administration of Finland. But it was soon found that the Cadet Corps was tainted with the dogma of a Finnish separate state and would not serve Russian interests; it was dissolved in 1903. The office of the Finnish official in the War Ministry was abolished, too.⁴⁸ For a while, only the Finnish Guards Battalion survived the reform.

Lieutenant General Glazov, the chief of staff of the Finnish military district, was greatly satisfied with the reform. In his opinion, the Finns still were infected by the spirit of separatism, sympathetic to Sweden, and without any feeling of brotherhood-in-arms towards the Russians. Ending Finnish military service might, it was hoped, ease the antipathy with which the population received the constitutional and military reforms. At least, it would deprive the Finnish 'state' of its 'army', which had lent material support to the false teaching about the political situation of Finland. The leaders of this local separatism would lose their confidence and boldness, an attitude of mind which derived from the existence of Finnish armed forces. Dissolving these troops, and taking instead tribute for the Imperial treasury, would also go well with the Russian position on the question of disarmament in the Peace Conference at the Hague.

In referring to the Hague Conference Glazov was certainly a hypocrite, but otherwise his conclusion was sincere: in view of the opposition of the Finns to the will of the Monarch, disbanding their troops was a vindication of the All-Highest sovereignty.⁴⁹

During the nineteenth century, the Russian Emperors, advised by their Finnish aides, had allowed the development of the Grand Duchy into a separate state in union with the Empire. The policy had guaranteed the security of St Petersburg, and one of Russia's provinces had flourished under the protection of its privileges, without any material loss to the Empire. In the absence of legal or constitutional guarantees, the position of Finland depended on the personal will of the Emperor. Nicholas II, though an absolute ruler, was not inaccessible to the ever more nationalist or great Russian opinion,

48 RGVA, fond 29, opis' 15, Kantseliariia Voennogo Ministerstva, Prikaz 435, 24. VII 1904.

49 RGVA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 712, soobrazheniia vyzvyvaiushchiia uprazhnenie finskikh voisk, General Leitenant Glazov, 25. IV 1901.

especially when his teacher, Pobedonostsev, stressed the traditional role of the Tsar and taught him to suspect all alien, Western ideas as disruptive. This drew the Tsar to support the policy of Kuropatkin and Bobrikov. The generals did not strive so much for outright ethnic Russification as for the unity of the Empire and its army, for which Finland's autonomous position and semi-independent army seemed dangerous in the light of the nationalist ideas with which they had been imbued.

Opposition silenced

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The Finns immediately responded to the February Manifesto by an address to the Emperor, signed by more than half a million people. Another petition was signed by more than one thousand well-known European scientists, artists and authors. Of course, Nicholas did not accept such protests.⁵⁰

The opposition was organized by a committee of constitutionalists, called the *kagaali* after the Jewish *qahal*, which the Russians first used pejoratively but which the constitutionalists adopted. Their idea was to disobey all illegal decrees in order not to acknowledge the Tsar's right to legislate for Finland without the consent of the Diet, or the right of his administrators to give orders based on unconstitutional laws.

The main task of the *kagaali* was to organize a strike against the Russian-ordered conscriptions in 1902–04. In this they succeeded rather well in 1902, aided by the field organization of the Social Democratic Party. Very few Finnish youths were eager to enter the Russian army, and even fewer Finns were able to understand Russian military and security interests. In 1903 and 1904 the strike did not succeed so well, because of threats by the Governor-General.

The constitutionalists were opposed by the older wing of the Finnish national party, the Old Finns, as they were called, who preferred to obey lest all national achievements be lost. When constitutionalist officials were dismissed by Bobrikov, the Old Finns replaced them, whereby the Finnish language conquered new positions. The strike of the conscripts demonstrated that the spirit of

50 *Pro Finlandia 1899; Les adresses internationales à S.M. L'Empereur Grand Duc Nicolas II. 1899.*

separatism was supported not only by the few educated elites but by the broad layers of Finnish society; in fact, it was an important occasion for a general popular mobilization of national politics, though the party leadership remained upper-class and the Socialist labour leaders were mostly ignored.⁵¹ The old division into a Finnish and a Swedish party was replaced by a new one of Constitutionalist and Compliant parties.

Bobrikov also tried to Russify the higher echelons of the Finnish administration, but he found few men who knew the local languages and customs, and those who did were not of the best ability. That is why he had to resort to the Old Finns even though he could not trust them. The work of the Finnish government was restricted almost exclusively to security matters during Bobrikov's governor-generalship, with very little attention paid to purely civilian matters.⁵²

Bobrikov believed that he had right and might on his side, which the Finns were bound to recognize before long. Even when entering office he had foreseen that during the reforms he inaugurated evil opposition would come forth and would have to be crushed at any price.⁵³ To counter the opposition, the Governor-General introduced Tsarist police methods. "Because of the unreliability of the local administration" the gendarme corps in Finland was strengthened and informers hired "to reveal disorders and to take countermeasures".⁵⁴

Plenty of information was received by the Governor-General, because the informers were well paid by the gendarmes. It became known that criminal separatists boldly denied the rights of the Russian Monarch in Finland, and were agitating for passive and even active opposition: "there is no doubt that a very influential secret organization, centred in Helsinki, has spread throughout the country, trying to terrorize both the authorities and private citizens".⁵⁵ It was

51 The workers' party had been established in 1899 and renamed Social Democratic party in 1903.

52 My colleague Pertti Haapala has drawn my attention to the fact that the collection of Finnish laws and decrees from the period 1901-05 contains legislation almost exclusively on military and police matters.

53 Estlander, *Elva årtionden ur Finlands historia*, vol. III: 1898-1908, p. 26; Borodkin, *Generalguvernör Bobrikoffs minne*, p. 9.

54 8/21. VIII 1902, Elenev, starshii chinovnik dlia osobykh poruchenii pri Finliandskom General-Gubernatora. KKK 1906, I department, n:o I-3, National Archives of Finland.

55 *Kratkii obzor protivopravitel'stvennogo dvizheniia v Finliandii s kontsa 1898 goda*; Zein, 5. II 1901. KKK, Hd 80, n:o 1. National Archives of Finland.

said that 40,000 rifles had been smuggled into the country from abroad in boxes labelled 'fried pork', or that Finnish emigrants were being trained in England, thence to return home to lead a popular rising against Russia.⁵⁶ There was no end of denouncements of secret meetings and preparations.⁵⁷ Bobrikov stated: "It is hard to live and work here surrounded by open and secret enemies."⁵⁸

Probably the Governor-General did not believe the wildest stories, but he used them to persuade the government in St Petersburg to increase his authority. Kuropatkin had other worries after the Finnish battalions had been dissolved in 1901, and Plehwe mainly used his tenure of the office of Minister State Secretary to further his own career and lost interest in Finland when, in 1902, he was appointed Minister of the Interior instead of the murdered Sipiagin. But the unceasing flow of alarming information could not be ignored, and in 1903 Bobrikov was given the authority decreed in the 1881 'temporary' emergency laws. Disobedient officials could thereafter be dismissed and expelled from the country, and newspapers censored and suppressed. The opposition was easily silenced because they did not have much skill in conspiratorial activity, but many of the emigrés continued their anti-Russian propaganda in Stockholm and other western capitals.

Bobrikov met many difficulties in the course of his reforms and much was left incomplete, but the main goal was achieved. "The dissolution of the Finnish troops saved Holy Russia from the danger of complications in Finland".⁵⁹

Military plans for civil war

Instead of strengthening the imperial defence in the north-west, the reform of the Finnish military system left only one brigade of eight

56 Special department 104/1901, n:o 220, Special department 38/1902, spravka o vvoze oruzhiia v Finliandiiu, KKK, National Archives of Finland.

57 Special department 69/1900, 101/1901, 172/1901, KKK, National Archives of Finland.

58 Borodkin, *Generalguvernör Bobrikoffs minne*, p. 27.

59 Borodkin, *Iz noveishei istorii Finliandii; vremia upravleniia N. I. Bobrikova*, p. 97.

battalions of Russian rifles in the border country.⁶⁰

Against eventual civil disorder, two *sotnii* of Orenburg Cossacks were transferred to Finland, the staff of the detachment and the 5th *sotnia* to Helsinki, and the 6th *sotnia* to Turku, in all 245 Cossacks.⁶¹ There was not much police work for the Cossacks, but in 1902 they were needed with their whips and sabres to dispel a demonstration against conscription held in the central square of Helsinki.⁶²

The local police force was "not yet reorganized to cooperate with the military", i.e. they still obeyed the Finnish law. In order to avoid incidents between the civilian population and the military, due to the army's ignorance of the local languages and administrative customs, a detachment of the 6th squadron of field gendarmes was formed and stationed in Helsinki.⁶³ It is not quite clear how much the gendarmes

60 RUSSIAN TROOPS IN FINLAND IN 1902-03

Finland Rifle Brigade staff in Helsinki	
1st Regiment of eight companies in Helsinki	1,157 men
2nd Regiment at Hämeenlinna,	1,091
3rd Regiment at Turku	1,105
4th Regiment, staff and one battalion at Nikolaistad	
second battalion at Oulu	1,196
military hospital in Helsinki	..
Viipuri fortress garrison:	
fortress artillery	..
fortress mine company	101
fortress infantry battalion	643
military hospital	
Sveaborg fortress, headquarters troops	51
gendarme detachment	19
supply magazine	11
military hospital	35
fortress infantry regiment of 10 companies	1,422
fortress artillery	1,233
mine company	155
military telegraph	41
quartermaster's detachment	15
(Sveaborg total	2,882)

RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 327 po chasti stroevoi shtaba Finliandskago voennago okruga o kvartirnom rospisanii voisk okruga 1902-1903.

61 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 327 po chasti stroevoi shtaba Finliandskago voennago okruga o kvartirnom rospisanii voisk okruga 1902-1903.

62 The violent conflict was provoked by Finnish activists in order to acquire more support for their irreconcilable opposition, in Klinge's opinion, in *Kejsartiden* pp. 381-82.

63 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 296 o grazhdanskoi i voennoi politzii v voennoe vremia, o sformirovanii polevogo zhandarmskogo eskadrona, signed by Lieutenant Colonel Zein, Lieutenant General Glazov, 24. IV 1899.



"Helsinki, Market square 18. April (?) 1902." Military measures being taken against the demonstration of the Finns on the occasion of the first call-up according to the Russian national service law of 1901, unconstitutional in the Finnish view. The conflict subsequently provoked a few Finns to behave like terrorists in reaction to seeing their fellow-countrymen treated as Russian mobs were.
Photo: Museovirasto Neg 101978.

possessed the necessary knowledge.

Bobrikov thought that one rifle brigade was not a sufficient force against a Finnish rebellion and demanded more troops. "They are necessary as a concrete threat against disorders and an efficient means of Russification".⁶⁴

64 Bobrikov to v. Plehwe 28. IX 1903, KKK Hd 80, n:o 5, National Archives of Finland.

The War Ministry agreed and doubled the Russian Finland sharpshooter or rifle brigade.⁶⁵ Doubling the staff took a little time because of the lack of officers, but arming the augmented troops was easy with the rifles of the disbanded Finnish battalions, 1,321 Mosin rifles and twenty-five Smith & Wesson revolvers for each battalion. The Finnish barracks were also taken over by the Russian state for the Russian sharpshooters.⁶⁶

The staff of the Second Rifle Brigade was stationed at Viipuri and the troops mainly in the eastern half of the country.⁶⁷ In all, the brigade strength was 4,902 soldiers, the numbers in the battalions being between 578 and 751 men, the full wartime number 960 bayonets for each battalion or 240 each company, and 103 non-combatants for each brigade.

To replace the Finnish Dragoons, the 55th Finland Dragoon regiment was hastily formed and garrisoned at Lappeenranta. It consisted of six squadrons, in all 940 men. The artillery battalion also was doubled, so that the Finland artillery regiment numbered 717 men with thirty-two guns, and the mobile ammunition column eighty-eight men. The military district supply administration looked after the supply magazines.⁶⁸ Except for the Viipuri fortress artillery and a few staffs, which were not accounted for in detail, there were on 1 January 1903 in all 15,669 Russian soldiers in Finland.⁶⁹ A few hundred officers

65 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 319 po formirovaniu 2i Finliandskoi strel'kovoi brigada 1902.

66 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 712, Ob"iasnitel'naia zapiska po voprosu o preobrazovaniakh, vyzyvaemykh Vysochaishem Manifestom 29 iunia 1901 g.

67 the 5th Finland Rifle Regiment staff in Viipuri
– a battalion at Mikkeli

– another battalion at Kuopio

the 6th Finland Rifle Regiment staff at Hamina

– second battalion at Hamina

– two companies/first battalion at Kymenkartano

two companies/first battalion at Tuusula.

the 7th Finland Rifle Regiment staff in Viipuri

– two battalions in Viipuri, in the summer of 1903 temporarily at Kuopio and Hämeenlinna

the 8th Finland Rifle Regiment staff in Viipuri

– two battalions in Viipuri.

68 There were magazines at Sveaborg, in Viipuri, at Hämeenlinna, Lappeenranta, in Turku, at Tuusula and Hamina, each guarded by eleven men, and a commandant's office at Lappeenranta with nine soldiers.

69 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 327 po chasti stroevoi shtaba Finliandskago voennago okruga o kvartirnom rospisanii voisk okruga 1902–1903; RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 924 o dislokatsii voisk okruga po sluchae mobilizatsii 1896–1900; raskvartirovaniia 1go Finliandskago strel'kovago polka v period mobilizatsii i do vystuplenii v voennoi pokhod.



"Helsinki, the Northern Quay in 1902". A Cossack detachment ready to restore order. The Cossacks were perhaps obsolete as a cavalry force, but useful as a police force in the many internal conflicts in the Empire. Proud of their privileged status, they remained loyal to the old regime longer than any other troops in 1917.

Photo: Museovirasto, sign. 26.6.-79.

were not included in this number, because the housing lists, *kvartinoe rospisanie*, only counted 'other ranks'.

Simultaneously with the reform of the Finnish military service, the financial levelling up of the military burden was attended to. In 1899, a sum of ten million marks (one Finnish mark was equal to one French franc) had been proposed to the extraordinary Diet, the sum roughly counted as the difference between Russian and Finnish military expenditure in relation to the numbers of the population.⁷⁰

70 Ob uravnenii voenno-finansovoi tiagosti voinskoi povinnosti Finliandii s takovoiu zhe v Imperii. KKK 1905, 2. department, n:o 13, National Archives of Finland; Keisarillisen Majesteetin Armollinen Esitys Suomenmaan Valtiosäädyille rahal-

The Diet did not consent to the payment, but Bobrikov thought that it was only fair to make the Finnish state pay the cost of the military reform into the Russian treasury. In 1902, the Senate paid two million marks for acquiring housing for the increase in Russian troops and officers (who were no longer able to lease rooms from the recalcitrant Finns). In 1903 and 1904, an additional eight million marks were taken as an advance payment for the sums which Finland was to pay into the Imperial Treasury for military purposes. The exact amount to be compensated could never be counted, because it was difficult to define which expenditure was military or civil, local or imperial, but all the Russian authorities were unanimous that ten million marks was far below the sum which Finland was saved by its exemption from military service.⁷¹

Bobrikov complained that even two brigades were not sufficient for the defence of the country and keeping order there, but Kuropatkin explained that no more forces were available, because the army had to guard the immensely long borders of the Empire, where many other places were much more endangered than Finland.⁷² The Main Staff promised to send reinforcements if the situation should grow really dangerous. A detachment of divisional strength from the Guards Corps was in readiness to be sent to Finland, with thirty guns and a brigade of cavalry. These troops were to be stationed in the Eastern part of the country to secure communications with the Empire⁷³ and, probably, to prevent disorder from spreading to the Imperial capital.

The two brigades garrisoned in Finland, well acquainted with local circumstances, could thus concentrate on quelling the rebellion. The

lisen asevelvollisuusrasituksen tasoittamisessa Suomessa ja Keisarikunnassa. Asia-kirjat väliaikaisilta valtiopäiviltä vuonna 1899. (Imperial proposal for the financial levelling of military burden).

71 Ob"iasnitelnaia zapiska k proektu Polozheniia o poriadke proisvodstva raskhodov na voennyya nadobnosti, odnosimykh na schet Finliandskoi kazny; Vedomosti primernago raskhoda kotorym trebovalsa-by soderzhanie Finskikh voisk v tom sluchae, esli khodataistvo seima 1899 goda ob uvelichenii sikh voisk s 5600 do 12000 chelovek raznykh rodov oruzhii odostoili-by (signed by Seyn). KKK 1905, 2. department, n:o 13, National Archives of Finland.

72 O priiniatii mer na sluchai usileniia voisk, v krae kvartiriuiushchikh, 1899. Ven sot asiak 14 242, National Archives of Finland; Mery na sluchai oslozhneniia politicheskikh obstoiatelstv. KKK, II otdel, delo 7 XIV 7, National Archives of Finland.

73 Mesures de précaution contre l'éventualité de troubles en Finlande, French Military Attaché Moulin to the French War Ministry 4. IV 1899, EMATSH 7 N 1475.

security of Helsinki–Sveaborg was always the most important concern. The garrison there had to be strong enough to guarantee order in the town, supported by the garrisons of Tuusula at twenty-seven versts from Helsinki, and of Hämeenlinna at one hundred versts. The unreliable population of Turku was to be watched by a garrison of two infantry battalions and one Cossack *sotnia*.⁷⁴

The staff of the military district remembered the danger of an enemy landing, too. The defence planning for Finland had been based on co-operation between Russian and Finnish troops and on the sympathy or at least neutrality of the local population. Now the situation had changed. The plans had to be redrawn in case the Russian troops, in mobilized strength, had to operate against an enemy invasion and a popular rising that would join forces with the enemy; or non-mobilized Russian troops would have to act against a popular rising during a threatening conflict with an external enemy; or they could have to act against independent disorders in Finland.

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The precautionary measures taken during the Crimean War were reviewed. The troops had been charged with the task of guarding government offices and the treasury, archives, churches, bridges, and communications, with the additional tasks of keeping an eye on suspected persons, and of preparing demolitions to impede enemy movements. Civilian authorities had been charged with the task of housing, transporting, and supplying the army, and of organizing coastal guards and preventing the capture of ships by the enemy. Most of the measures reviewed were found necessary even in 1901, and also in case of a rebellion.⁷⁵

Were the planned military measures to be found necessary, imperial regulations for a state of war or martial law were declared to be valid also in Finland.⁷⁶ Thereby the Governor-General would have been authorized to dismiss officials, forbid meetings, expel people, suppress publications, set up courts martial, arrest suspects, and confiscate property. In the Finnish view, the citizens' rights were

74 O priniatii mer na sluchai usileniia voisk, v krae kvartiruiushchikh. Ven sot asiak 14242, National Archives of Finland.

75 Mery na sluchai oslozhneniia politicheskikh obstoiatelstv. KKK 1904, 2. department, n:o 7 XIV 7, National Archives of Finland.

76 Armollinen Asetus siitä, että sotajoukkojen hallinnosta sodassa 26. II 1890 ja linnoitusten hoidosta 15. IX 1901 annettujen Asetusten sekä sotatilaan julistettuja paikkakuntia koskevain Säännösten 1892 vaikutus ulotetaan Suomenmaahan. Asetuskokoelma (published laws and decrees) 1904, n:o 76/35 20. V/2. VI 1904.

involved and, consequently, the regulations ought to have been enacted through the correct constitutional procedure. Their publication as Imperial decrees was therefore added to the list of Bobrikov's illegal acts.

The Cossack charge against a lawful demonstration in 1902 was for many previously loyal Finnish subjects of the Emperor the definite threshold from passive constitutional opposition to acceptance of violent action. Bobrikov was murdered in June 1904 by Eugen Schauman, a young official, influenced by the disturbed political climate.⁷⁷

Bobrikov had compared his task to that of Count Murav'ev, who, in 1863, had been appointed Governor-General in Vilna, but Witte countered that Murav'ev had quelled a rebellion, while Bobrikov seemed intent on provoking one. For a while, Bobrikov had succeeded in silencing the opposition he had provoked, but in fact he utterly failed in bringing the Finns closer to the Empire or to the Russian people. Instead of a loyal population, a rebellious nation had been created in the immediate vicinity of the Imperial capital. The rapid change of opinion from one generation to another was illustrated by the fact that a mother had the picture of Tsarevich Aleksei hanging in her room, while her daughters preferred the portrait of Eugen Schauman in theirs.⁷⁸

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Should the enemy attempt a landing

While not neglecting to take into account the Governor-General's concern to help maintain internal order, the main task of the garrison in Finland remained the defence of the Grand Duchy. As always, it was supposed that a naval enemy would invade Finland in order to defeat the Russian forces there, cut off Finland from the Empire, and then advance towards St Petersburg.

The task of the Sveaborg fortress in the defence was to guard the fleet anchorage. The commander of the the fortress demanded that the local districts or parishes of Helsinki, Espoo (Esbo) and Sipoo (Sibbo) should be included in his fortress district or *espalanade*; it was necessary for preventing undesirable elements from settling close to

77 Seppo Zetterberg, *Viisi laukausta Senaatissa*. (Five shots in the Senate).

78 Halsti, *Muistelmät*, vol. I, pp. 25, 59. (Memoirs of H.).

the fortress. Also, according to the Russian rules for fortress administration, the inhabitants of a fortress district could be ordered to perform construction work and to supply victuals, transport vehicles, and building materials for the garrison.

Field troops were needed to guard the landward front and the flanks of the fortress, the 1st Rifle Battalion in Laajasalo and the 9th Rifle Battalion in Lauttasaari, under the commander of the fortress.⁷⁹ The commander of the 2nd Brigade complained that, in case of war, he also had to send detachments to guard railway bridges at Lahti and Kouvola, and thus he would not have a sufficient number of men left to carry out the mobilization of the brigade. The Sveaborg and Viipuri fortresses had similar difficulties because of the slow arrival of their reservists, 3,016 men from the interior of Russia for the two fortresses, and the simultaneous necessity of guarding the coast against a sudden attack from the sea.

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The threat, of course, was Japan and Britain, her ally since 1902. The Far Eastern War broke out in February 1904, and although the theatre of war was distant, it deeply influenced the political and military situation in the Baltic Sea and its coastal regions. At the very beginning of the navigation season in 1904, when the ice had broken, measures were taken to keep a duty battery at the fortresses always ready to open fire against enemy ships. The Sveaborg anchorage was guarded until the end of the navigation season in October. Trial mobilization was also undertaken by a few detachments, for example, by the Viipuri fortress artillery.⁸⁰

79 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 959 k planu oborony Finliandii 1904; shtab Sveaborgskoi kreposti 18. II 1904, 24. II 1904 to the commander of the military district of Finland, the commander of the Viipuri fortress to General Olkhovskii 21. VI 1904, correspondence between the brigade staffs and the staff of the military district 8.-12. IV 1904.

80 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 959, Sveaborg staff to military district commander 18. XI 1904; RGVIA, fond 1338, delo 950 k planu oborona Finlandii 1900-1901, Mobilisatsionnaia boevaia gotovnost' (of the Viipuri fortress).

IMPERIAL SECURITY THREATENED

Temporary measures

The Minister of the Interior von Plehwe was murdered a few weeks after Bobrikov's death and Prince Sviatopolk-Mirskii was appointed to the vacant post. The Prince proposed to make government policy more acceptable to majority opinion, but because the Emperor kept his absolute power, popular dissatisfaction grew, and the war in the Far East grew more unpopular with each defeat of the Russian army there. After the Bloody Sunday in St Petersburg in January 1905, Sviatopolk-Mirskii, who was too liberal and soft for Nicholas II, was replaced by Bulygin, which did not quell the popular agitation.

Prince Ivan Obolenskii, who had successfully suppressed the Kharkov peasant disorders in 1902, was appointed to the post of Governor-General of Finland after Bobrikov. The murder of his predecessor was carefully investigated, no conspiracy could be discovered, but the authorities believed in the existence of secret Finnish preparations for a rising against the Imperial power.

Obolenskii persuaded the Emperor to convene the Estates to a Diet at the end of 1904. The session did not lead to the loyal submission which the Governor-General had hoped for. The Diet unanimously declared all unificatory measures unconstitutional.

In the list of illegal decrees was the national service 'law' from 1901. As a matter of fact, the Imperial officials themselves were beginning to have doubts about this law. The Deputy Governor-General Deutrich, Bobrikov's and Obolenskii's closest aide, explained that Finnish national service did not enhance the military power of the Empire. One needed only to remember the role of the separate Polish army in the rebellion of 1830, and the expressed wish of the Finns to separate from the Russians, he said. It was no security but a danger for St Petersburg if a hostile army of twenty thousand armed men and hundred thousand trained reservists existed in its vicinity. The Finns ought to be compelled to pay a financial contribution to the imperial military needs instead.⁸¹

81 Zakliuchenie Pomoshchnika Finliandskago General-Gubernatora Tainago Sovetnika Deitrikha po vzbuzhdennomu v petsitsii zemskikh tsinov seima 1904 i 1905 goda voprosu o voinskoi povinnosti. KKK 1906 goda, 2. department, delo

The War Ministry had already demanded a payment of twelve or fifteen million marks from the Finnish state for the training of Finnish youths in the imperial army,⁸² but the Senate estimated that the sum should amount to only a couple of millions. Leaving the definite calculation of the sum to a mixed committee, Obolenskii had made the Finns pay 4.23 millions by the end of 1904.⁸³

Now, a proposed payment of nine million marks in lieu of personal service, not in addition to it, was to be laid before the Diet, 7,800,000 marks to be paid from the regular military revenue of the Finnish state, and 1,200,000 marks from increased taxes. The proposed sum was then increased to round ten million marks when the Guards battalion was disbanded at the end of the summer of 1905. The ten million marks were paid in August 1905.⁸⁴

This payment was intended only as a temporary measure, because the military problem was proposed for discussion in a mixed Russo-Finnish committee,⁸⁵ convened to demarcate local questions from all-Imperial matters.

The Estates accepted the payment of the tribute as a temporary measure for 1905 but, because the Diet was prematurely dissolved, no regular budget for the next three-year period, 1905-07, was set. The Finnish Senate declared that there would be no difficulties in the payment of a further ten million marks for 1906 and another instalment for 1907, if only the population could be reassured that their constitutional rights were to be respected.⁸⁶ Obolenskii showed no great enthusiasm for meeting Finnish wishes; the experience of the

1 - 1. National Archives of Finland.

82 Pamiatnaia zapiska po voprosu uplati finliandskoi kazny v obshchegosudarstvennykh rashodakh na voennyya nadobnosti. KKK 1905, 2. department, delo 13, National Archives of Finland.

83 Doklad po kantseliarii General'nogo Gubernatora 10/23. VII 1908. KKK 1908, II department, delo 44, National Archives of Finland.

84 Senate to the Governor-General 23. VIII 1905. KKK 1905, IV department, delo 13-3-t, National Archives of Finland.

85 Vysochaishe Ego Imperatorskago Velichestva predlozhenie Zemskim Chinam Finliandii o posobii na voennyya nuzhdy, uplachivaemoi finliandskoiu kaznoi v Gosudarstvennoe kaznacheistvo; Vysochaishe utverzhden 16/29. III 1905. KKK 1905, 2. department, delo 7. III, National Archives of Finland.

86 Valtiovaliokunnan mietintö n:o 10, Asiakirjat Valtiopäiviltä Helsingissä 1904-1905; Senaatin kaikkein alamaisten esitys 6. VI 1905. KKK 1905, 4. department, delo 13-3-t, National Archives of Finland (Committee report and Senate proposal).

previous Diet made it probable that they would fall into politicking,⁸⁷ i. e. discussing constitutional principles.

The military reform was continued. In the summer of 1905 the military district of Finland was abolished and the area annexed to the military district of St Petersburg, as Bobrikov had proposed in his report of 1886. Thus, Obolenskii was the first Governor-General who was not simultaneously commander-in-chief of the troops in Finland. Instead, a new army corps staff, the 22nd, was established by order of the War Ministry on 10 June 1905.⁸⁸ Under its command were the two rifle brigades, the artillery and the dragoons in the country. The army corps as well as the Sveaborg and Viipuri garrisons were under the command of the military district staff in St Petersburg.

Secret enemies

Eugen Schauman was a loner, but there were other more or less organized Activists, who had started publishing an uncensored newspaper *Fria Ord* or *Vapaita Sanoja* (Free Words) in Stockholm and smuggling it into Finland. Amateurish attempts to imitate Russian terrorists led to a few assassinations and other attacks. For the Activists, it was clear that Finland could not withstand the Imperial pressure alone, and therefore they sought contact with Russian revolutionaries, especially with the Socialist Revolutionaries, as well as similar national-revolutionary groups among Russia's minority populations. Their publications the Finnish Activists carried into Russia from abroad. In secret meetings, in Paris 1904 and Geneva in 1905, the end of Tsarism and the liberation of the oppressed peoples were discussed. Russian affairs were to go through a Constituent Assembly, and Polish and Finnish affairs by assemblies of their own. Under the leadership of Konni Zilliacus, a journalist, the Activists organized a small party among themselves because the Constitutionals did not approve of their illegal methods.

The Finnish workers' party had been established in 1899 and had adopted the Social Democrat programme from Germany in 1903. In principle, the Socialists were internationalists, but in practice they had to work within the limits of Finnish autonomy, increasingly

87 Obolenskii to the Minister State Secretary 7/20. VI 1905. KKK 1905, IV department, delo 13-3-t, National Archives of Finland.

88 RGVIA, fond 2222, opis' 1, fond Shtaba 22go armeiskago korpusa.

contaminated by Finnish national teaching. Among them there existed no unanimity on the question of whether the main enemy of the Finnish proletariat was the Finnish bourgeoisie, or whether Tsarism was the common enemy of all Finns. The party was internally divided into groups along these lines, and there were also a few worker activist groups, just as amateurish as the student activists.

For a while, the Activists remained hidden from the authorities, but soon the gendarmes received reports that rifle clubs had been established for training Finns to defend the country and its rights.⁸⁹ It seemed to the Russians that Finland was secretly arming.⁹⁰

There was some truth the reports after the Russo-Japanese War had broken out. Colonel Motojiro Akashi, the Japanese military attaché in Stockholm, proposed to the General Staff in Tokio that the Russian war effort might be seriously harmed if a revolutionary movement could be instigated in the Tsar's empire. Zilliacus contacted Akashi and with Japanese money he acquired old Swiss Vetterli rifles and shipped them from Copenhagen on the steamship *John Grafton* to Finnish Activists and Russian Socialist Revolutionaries. At the beginning of September 1905, a few hundred rifles were successfully unloaded on the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia, but the ship then ran aground and had to be blown up. The remains were discovered by the Imperial customs yacht *Aziia* and sixteen thousand rifles were seized. The Russian revolutionaries never received any rifles, nor does it seem that they were organized well enough for the task, under their provocateur leaders Father Gapon and Azev.⁹¹

The rifles were concrete evidence that the alarming gendarme reports were not groundless, nor was it certain that other shiploads of arms had not arrived undetected in Finland. In their planning, the military staffs had to pay attention to the potential existence of a secret Finnish army and to its reported plans to kill all Russians in the country.⁹²

89 Kotitarkastuksissa löydettyä aineistoa, F.W. Schauman, n:o 1 & n:o 3, KKK Hg 16, National Archives of Finland. (confiscated materials).

90 Rumiantsev, *Finliandtia vooruzhaetsia*, pp. 5-7.

91 For the connection with the Socialist Revolutionaries and the Japanese, see: Antti Kujala, "March separately _ strike together; the Paris and Geneva Conferences held by Russian and Minority Nationalities' Revolutionary and Opposition Parties, 1904-1905", *Akashi, Rakka Ryusui*, pp. 88-167.

92 Tolki o vozstanii i pogolovnom izbienii vsekh russkikh, Special Department n:o 299 O vozmozhnosti vosstaniia, delo 104/1901; Sviaz finskikh separatistov s

Russia's diplomats in Copenhagen and Stockholm were instructed to ask the Scandinavian governments to prevent the arms traffic on "almost every ship" leaving for Finland.⁹³

In the troubled year of 1905 on a few occasions military force was called to suppress workers' meetings or demonstrations. Nobody was killed, the soldiers used rifle butts only, but the repressive methods sufficed to provoke the workers into resorting to violent measures – a few attempts on the life of Russian officials – and caused mutual ethnic antipathy if not outright hatred between the Russian soldiers and Finnish workers.⁹⁴

This alarming disloyalty led the Emperor also to part with his Finnish Life Guards. When the Third Finnish Rifle Battalion of the Imperial Life Guards concluded their 1905 summer camp training at Tsarskoe Selo, they were disarmed and after returning to Helsinki the battalion was disbanded.⁹⁵

It has been said that Obolenskii imagined that seventy-five thousand armed Finns were only waiting for the return of the battalion before rising in rebellion.⁹⁶ The Ministry of the Interior informed the Minister of War Roediger that a rebellion was being prepared in Finland,⁹⁷ and at the beginning of October Obolenskii, in a newspaper interview, warned the Finns that the government was preparing to send a division from St Petersburg to Finland.⁹⁸

In fact, measures were taken to increase the number of troops in Finland to their full wartime strength where necessary. At first, a few men were sent to each regiment in Finland to top up the peacetime

revoliutsionnoi Rossiei, Special Department n:o 2299, delo 104/1901; o pomoshchi inostrannykh gosudarstv Finliandii, ob ukrepleniakh i voruzheniakh Svetsii, department IV, Special Department, delo 104/1901; Seyn's report for the years 1904–1905, Hd 80, KKK, National Archives of Finland.

93 AVPR, fond kantseliarii 1905 g, delo 35 & 111, fond kantseliarii 1906 g, delo 40 & 128.

94 A detailed study: Kujala, *Venäjän hallitus ja Suomen työväenliike 1899–1905*. (Russian government and Finnish labour movement)

95 On the history of the Guards Battalion, see: Gripenberg, *Lifgardets 3 finska skarpskyttebataljon*.

96 Estlander, *Elva årtonden...* vol. III p. 312.

97 RGVIA, fond 400, opis' 6, delo 792, Min. Vnutrennykh del zavedyvaiushchaia politsei, to Roediger 27. VIII 1905.

98 *Novoe Vremia* 6. X 1905; the interview has been cited by Juhani Tasihiin, *Venäjän kieli Venäjän Suomen-politiikassa vuosina 1905–1909*; Suomen historian lisensiaattityö Helsingin yliopistossa 1979, p. 51. (Russian language in Russian policy in Finland; a licenciate study of the University of Helsinki).

numbers.⁹⁹ Further reinforcements were to be sent from the Guards, the 1st and the 16th Army Corps, but, if possible, without disturbing the mobilization of the detachments which were preparing for the Far Eastern war.

The first echelon of troops to be sent to Finland would have consisted of eight battalions, one sapper battalion, twelve guns, and seventeen cavalry squadrons or Cossack sotnias with six horse artillery guns, and one company of railway troops. In the second echelon, the 41st Infantry Division, with their artillery, and the staff of the 16th Army Corps to lead these troops, would have been transferred to Viipuri, while a further division was preparing in Reval to be transshipped over the Gulf to Helsinki. The task of these troops would have been to occupy the country and to put an end to the expected disorders. The troops transferred to the Karelian Isthmus were to take the line Viipuri-Käkisalme and to secure the railway from Viipuri to St Petersburg, as well as to take possession of Koivisto (Björkö) where a naval station was to be established.¹⁰⁰

Reinforcements were also ordered from the regions of Vilna and Archangel to the Sveaborg, Viipuri, Mikkeli and Hamina garrisons,¹⁰¹ but it seems that there was no time to execute these long-distance transfers before further developments took place.

The war in Manchuria increased the necessity for precautionary measures in Finland, although at the same time a number of detachments and volunteer officers were sent to the theatre of war from here, too.¹⁰² If the Japanese torpedo boats were able to simulate innocent English fishing boats on the North Sea, as the Russians thought, they were probably able to attempt something even on the

99 RGVIA, fond 400, opis' 6, delo 792 ob usilenii voisk v Finliandii 29. VIII- 17. IX 1905.

100 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 332, Instruksiia nachalnikam chastei Karelskago otriada v sviazi obiavleniem Finliandii na voennom polozenii. (s.d., but not earlier than 1905).

101 RGVIA, fond 400, opis' 6, delo 792, popolneniia Finliandskikh voisk, spravka 9. IX 1905.

102 RGVIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 960 ob otravlenii voinskikh chastei na Dal'nyi Vostok 1904, delo 962 Svedeniia o boevoi gotovnosti voisk okruga, delo 963 delo ob ukreplenii oboronosposobnosti krepostei i voisk okruga na sluchai voennykh deistvii 1904, delo 967 ob ukomplektovanii lichnogo sostava voinskikh chastei, otravleniinykh na Dal'nyi Vostok 1905, delo 969 o privedenii v boevuiu gotovnost' voisk okruga v sviazi o voennykh deistviakh na Dal'nem Vostoke 1905.

Baltic Sea. Coastal guards were stationed in fishers' cottages in the islands, and Viipuri and Sveaborg were guarded by boats and yachts. Guarding the coasts and protecting the ports was particularly important because the Baltic had been denuded of Russian naval forces when Rozhdestvenskii, at the end of 1904, had left with his squadron on the voyage halfway round the world to join battle in the Far East, more exactly in the Tsushima Sound.¹⁰³

The Finnish usurpation of power

All the precautionary measures proved futile. By the end of October 1905 a general strike and almost a revolution took place in Russia. Witte, who had succeeded in reaching a tolerable peace in the Far East, consented to take responsibility for the government on condition that Nicholas II desisted from absolute power. Instead of the haphazard governmental system, a cabinet was established under the leadership of the prime minister, and on 17/30 October an Imperial manifesto promised the population civil rights and participation in legislation. Modern responsible unified government and parliamentarism seemed to be at hand, but foreign policy, the armed forces, and appointments were to remain Imperial prerogatives.

The majority of the politically active Russian population were satisfied with the change, the general strike ended, the leaders of the St Petersburg Workers' Soviet were arrested, an uprising in Moscow in December was put down, the Siberian railway was cleared of rebels, and the army was transferred home from Manchuria.

During the disorders, Witte had stressed the importance of Finland remaining peaceful, among other reasons, to provide a place of asylum for Nicholas II if he should be compelled to escape from the capital. But on 29 October, the Finnish railways joined the general strike and the next day all offices, businesses, and factories in the country ceased working.

Finnish Constitutionals, Socialists, and Activists joined the general strike, but for different ends of their own. The Constitutionals wanted to make the Imperial government desist from their unconstitutional measures of unification. The workers aimed at social

103 RG VIA, fond 1338, opis' 1, delo 968 o merakh gotovnosti vyzvannykh voinei s Iaponiei 1905.

reforms, equal voting rights in the first instance. The Activists saw the strike as a rising against Tsarism.

These events in Finland were typical of the Russian revolution of 1905, which was not unified nor centrally led, and had everywhere local features and contradictory aims.

Imperial sovereignty was for a while shattered in the border country.

The army had been preparing measures against a Finnish rebellion, but a general strike had not been foreseen. The army was blinded and paralysed by the cessation of railway, telegraph and telephone communications. No reports and no orders could be sent or received.

Strike committees took over the administration in towns from the official authorities, a few Russian officials were chased away, many gendarme offices were closed and their papers strewn in the streets and the men themselves ordered to disappear, never to return; and one of them was killed.

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Russian families were not threatened, but they moved from Helsinki to Sveaborg to be safe in case of Finnish disorders or Russian countermeasures; "zee Finns perhaps like to kill us Russians to be free [...] Tonight perhaps zey make a revolutzia and some bad men come to zee house and cut our throats", a lady explained to her English guest.¹⁰⁴

The Helsinki garrison cautiously kept to their barracks. The gendarme reports of the existence of tens of thousands of armed Finnish rebels, who were only waiting for the soldiers to appear on the streets to attack and massacre them, were 'confirmed' by rumours of an approaching rebel army from Tampere.

In fact, in Tampere a manifesto was drafted and accepted at a popular meeting, which demanded for Finland the status of an autonomous state with completely independent internal legislation and administration. The manifesto, on red paper, was brought to Helsinki by a delegation – this may have been the cause for the rumour of a rebel army – and it was confirmed, and a popular government elected by a crowd in the Railway Square on 3 November.

The crowd then stormed the Governor-General's office, demanding the dismissal of Obolenskii and the Old Finnish Senate. The Governor-General was powerless and unable to ask for military help from

104 Fraser, *The House by the Dvina; A Russian Childhood*, pp. 103–05.

barracks which lay a couple of street corners away. Remembering the popular violence in 1902 in Kharkov,¹⁰⁵ he was frightened and hastily tried to pacify the mob. To his question "Is this war?", an Activist answered: "Yes, in a way, although as yet without arms". Obolenskii tried to calm down the mob with promises.

In St Petersburg the Imperial government had already mastered the situation, and by using the military telegraph at Sveaborg Obolenskii succeeded in calling from Kronstadt the recently completed battleship *Slava* with a couple of old armoured ships to save the situation.

However, Obolenskii did not let the ships bombard the town but opened negotiations with the Constitutionalists, who, for their part, had seen that the strike was degenerating from a patriotic demonstration into mob rule. An understanding was reached that the incident was not a *coup d'état*. Obolenskii promised the restitution of Finland's rights, and pressed the Constitutionalists to pacify the common people by the promise of general and equal suffrage.

Witte had never approved of Bobrikov's forceful policy of Russification, and although annoyed at the Finnish strike, he favoured a return to the style of regime of Alexander III. Nicholas II consented, promising not to apply the manifesto of February 1899 until the constitutional problems had been solved in a legal way. Furnished with the Imperial signature, the new manifesto (the November Manifesto) was returned to Helsinki on 4 November and received with joy by the constitutionalists. They believed that the 'legal way' implied Finnish constitutional procedure, while Nicholas, of course, meant Russian law.

The workers understood that the Finnish oligarchy had had its rights resuscitated, but that the poor people had been left to wait for theirs. News of the failure of the Russian revolution were difficult to believe, and the manifesto was said to be a lie. The hidden division of Finnish society was thus revealed during a strike which had begun unanimously.

The gendarme reports notwithstanding, the Finns, of course, had no army nor arms, and if Obolenskii had chosen to bombard Helsinki, nothing could have prevented it. A citizens' guard had been established in the first days to replace the striking police force, and by the end of the strike it had been divided into workers' Red Guard and a National Guard mainly manned by students, but neither of the

105 Explanation given to me by Professor K.F. Shatsillo in 1982.

guards had any military importance. The general strike was stopped on 5 November, and the threatening guns of *Slava* and her consorts compelled the cessation of open protest even from the radical left.

A military pacification may have been closer than the Finns guessed. Rumours had been circulating in St Petersburg that Obolenskii had been arrested by Finnish rebels, that a republic had been declared, and that fifty thousand armed Finns were marching towards Helsinki. Afterwards, it was reported that the General Staff had started mobilizing troops for Finland, and a Finn in St Petersburg "with his own eyes saw artillery troops being embarked".¹⁰⁶ However, the War Minister, Roediger, in the end believed that military intervention was unnecessary because confirmation was received that the Finns had been pacified by the Imperial manifesto.

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Leo Mechelin, previously regarded as a 'criminal separatist' by the local Russian authorities, was appointed chairman of a Constitutional Senate, and all Bobrikovian governors and other higher administrators were replaced by Constitutionalists. Finnish courts of justice 'politicked' by sentencing collaborators and acquitting anti-governmental (i.e. anti-Tsarist) Constitutionalists. The law on general and equal suffrage for a single-chamber parliament was unanimously approved by the last Diet of four Estates and the Emperor signed it in June 1906.¹⁰⁷

The collapse of the Imperial authority in the Grand Duchy was blamed on the Governor-General. The Commander of the 22nd Army Corps, Baron Saltza, and Obolenskii accused each other of cowardice during the strike. Saltza explained that he could not have acted on his own initiative because no state of war had been declared. Obolenskii answered that the General ought to have understood without declarations that a warlike situation existed. Saltza replied by accusing Obolenskii of a lack of firmness when facing the Finnish mob and of cowardice because he had escaped to the warships but had not let Helsinki be bombarded and had surrendered the town to the Finnish Red Guard.¹⁰⁸

106 Törnqren, *Från Finlands strid för rätt och frihet; Personliga upplevelser åren 1901-1914*, p. 224. Hultin, *Päiväkirjani kertoo*, vol. I, p. 322. (The diary of H.). Törnqren had travelled to Russia to contact the liberals there and discussed with Witte, and Hultin's brother Captain Eelis Hultin served in St. Petersburg.

107 Sudebnaia volokita, KKK Hd 105, n:o 21, National Archives of Finland. (numerous examples of Russian complaints).

108 Numerous reports on the Finnish general strike, by Obolenskii and by Saltza: KKK Hd 80 n:o 9, 11, National Archives of Finland.

Obolenskii lost the battle of the reports, and his defeat was greeted with satisfaction by the ancient collaborators of Bobrikov. They had not liked Obolenskii's conciliatory measures even before the strike, and they had had to leave Finland when the country was taken over by the 'separatists' and all Russian authority had ceased.¹⁰⁹ For Colonel Seyn, a position of Governor was found in Grodno, also a region with national problems. Borodkin and a few others continued their literary or journalist activity against Finnish separatism. But most of the Bobrikovians were left unemployed and embittered, their careers in ruins and their nationalist and patriotic work annulled. In Moscow they found companions in misfortune who had been expelled from the Caucasus.

Witte had Nikolai Gerard, a jurist and member of the Imperial Council, appointed Governor-General of Finland. The first civilian in the office, Gerard believed in reinforcing the Imperial authority in Finland by applying the policy developed by the three Alexanders, not by using Bobrikovian police methods.

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It seemed to the expelled chauvinists that the Mechelin regime was not satisfied with its political victory; it also wanted to destroy the military achievements of the previous years. Among the first measures of the constitutionalist Senate was the proposal to re-establish the Finnish military force on the basis of the 1878 law of national service. The Senate explained that it was urgently necessary to convene the recently disbanded Guards Battalion to form cadres for a new Finnish army.¹¹⁰ Even in the critical internal situation, the Imperial government was able to fend off this attempt, which was "without any serious basis and only political in character: an attempt to return to the military system before 1901, which had been condemned from the throne of the All-Highest, because it was against the principle of unity of all the Imperial armed forces".¹¹¹

A detailed story from the contemporary Finnish point of view: Roos, *Suomen kansallislakko*.

The Russian view is explained by: Jussila, "Vuoden 1905 suurlakko Suomessa venäläisten silmin" (Russian view on the general strike in Finland).

109 Borodkin, *Generalguvernör N. Bobrikoff's minne*. Vladimirovich, *Revolutsiaa v Finliandii pri kniaze Ivane Obolenskom*. (Vladimirovich = A. A. Rheinboth, a Bobrikovian official in Finland, later police chief in Moscow, dismissed for corruption).

110 A most loyal proposal of the Senate 21. XII. 1905. O vozstanovlenii finskikh voisk, KKK, 2. department D-2/1906, National Archives of Finland.

111 Governor General to Minister State Secretary 30. XII 1905/12. I 1906; Minister

The Senate was also reluctant to pay the financial tribute which was meant to replace personal military service. The government in St Petersburg proposed a mixed committee to calculate the exact amount of the payment, but the Senate answered that the military measures had been taken without the co-operation of the proper constitutional Finnish authorities, and thus no reason for any Finnish payment existed, nor would any committee with Russian members have any authority in Finnish financial or budget questions. In the Imperial view, this was wrong, because Finland was part of the Empire and thus protected by its armed forces,¹¹² but in 1906 the government in St Petersburg had other, more urgent problems to worry about, because of the peasant risings, industrial strikes, and military revolts everywhere in the Empire.

In Finland, a serious incident took place in Sveaborg. A few detachments of the garrison revolted on 30 July 1906 and seized a couple of islands, from where they bombarded the main fortress. The *Tsesarevich* and the *Bogatyr* arrived from Kronstadt and together with the loyal part of the garrison easily compelled the rebels to surrender on 2 August.

The revolt was a symptom of the general dissatisfaction in the Empire, but the authorities saw it only as a problem of the prevention of revolutionary agitation, not as a proof that radical reforms were necessary. They thought that the common people, i. e. peasants and soldiers conscripted from peasants, were natural monarchists, and that only industrial workers and technical troops recruited from the towns were under the influence of alien imported ideas spread by agitators.

Generally, in military plans the obedience of the troops was not questioned. It is true that General A.V. Kaulbars, commander of the Odessa military district, pointed out that reserve troops were not as reliable as they had previously been and were not fit for operations.¹¹³ But usually only the eventual animosity of the local non-Russian population was taken into consideration.

State Secretary to Governor General 5. II 1906. O vozstanovlenii finskikh voisk, KKK 2. department D 2-1/1906, National Archives of Finland.

112 Minister State Secretary to Governor General 23. XI/6. XII 1905; Senate to Governor General 6. II 1906; Spravka, by starschii deloproizvoditel' Levenstern. KKK 1906, 2. department, delo 7-III, National Archives of Finland.

113 RG VIA, fond 400, opis' 6, delo 821, Komanduiushchii voiskami Odesskago voennago okruga Baron Aleksandr Vasil'evich Kaulbars 14. I 1906 (to General Polivanov).

The Finnish *Voima*

At the beginning of 1906, the Finnish Activists formed a sports association, called *Voima* or the Force, with numerous local clubs. Its professed aim was physical training and patriotic education, and its secret aim was to acquire weapons and train members in their use to defend the Finnish society – whether against Russian oppressors or Finnish Reds was not quite clear. They tried again to smuggle weapons into the country, but the 3,500 rifles were accidentally discovered by the Russians. For their part, the Red Guards formed in 1905 continued their semi-independent existence on the left wing of the Social Democratic party. In connection with the military revolt in Sveaborg, the Helsinki Red Guard tried once again to proclaim a general strike so as to compel the party to join the revolution. A mini-conflict between the Red Guards and the National Guards was suppressed by Russian soldiers. Part of the Red Guard then joined the rebels in the fortress. The Senate therefore ordered the Red Guard to be dissolved, and the party convention of the Social Democrats consented, so that only a few semi-criminal underground groups continued their activity.¹¹⁴ The *Voima*, after the Russians had pointed out the suspicious character of the organization, was also prohibited by the Senate.

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It was difficult for the Imperial authorities to distinguish between the different Finnish guards, as it was also difficult to know the difference between loyal opposition and revolutionary or criminal activity. Thus Constitutionalist, Activist and Red Guard organizations and activities were all regarded as expressions of the same united treasonable opposition.¹¹⁵ It was difficult to believe that the *Voima* existed only for the maintenance of law and order, as its leaders said, and difficult also to see the difference between Constitutionlists and Activists, which even the Old Finns were apt to see as expressions of the same dogmatic inflexibility.¹¹⁶

In the absence of any reliable military organization, the Mechelin Senate tried to increase the numbers of the Finnish police force and to acquire military rifles for them. The weapons were intended for

114 Kujala, "Suomalaiset vallankumousjärjestöt ja poliittinen rikollisuus 1906–1908". (Finnish Revolutionary Organizations and Political Crime).

115 Spravka o voime, KKK Hd 87 n:o 1; Perepiska ob obshchestve 'Sila', KKK I department, delo XX/1906

116 Gendarme Directorate to Governor-General 25. I 1905. KKK I department, delo IX 2, 1905.

maintaining law and order against the restless Leftists, because the outbreak of any disorder would have threatened social harmony and would have given the Russian government a pretext to intervene.¹¹⁷

The defence-line for St Petersburg is shifted

After the war and defeat in the Far East, the Russian military system was changed. The General Staff was made independent of the Ministry on the German model which was believed to be more efficient than the previous system. It took four years to reorganize the troops after the chaos left by the incoherent mobilisation for the distant war and the hundreds of punitive expeditions and small revolts of 1906–07. The debacle of Tsushima had left Russia with practically no navy, except the Black Sea fleet in its protected but closed theatre of activity. A Council of Imperial Defence was appointed under the chairmanship of Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevich, the Emperor's uncle, to bring unity to the military and naval planning.

An indication of the feeling of helpless exhaustion was the fact that at first it was thought that Kronstadt would be the front-line defence for St Petersburg. Then, in 1906, the main position was pushed a little westward, but only to the Kotka – Suursaari (Hogland) – Narva line. The *Slava* and the *Tsesarevich*, with the obsolete remains of earlier naval construction programmes, could not be called a navy, and the revolutionary spirit was exceptionally strong among the sailors, recruited mainly from among industrial workers; "the navy is not a source of strength, it is a threat", the Minister of War, Roediger, stated. The naval position in the eastern end of the Gulf of Finland was to be defended by mines, torpedo boats and coastal batteries on either side of the Gulf in support of Kronstadt, but the main responsibility for the defence of St Petersburg rested on the land army.

In the light of this lack of naval force the fright caused by gendarme information on the armed preparations in Finland and the subsequent general strike there are easy to comprehend. Grand Duke Sergei Mikhailovich, the inspector of artillery, pointed out that Finland was Russia's most dangerous enemy because she was closest to the Imperial capital.¹¹⁸ A collection of old ships and light craft were sent

117 Jussila, *Nationalismi ja vallankumous venäläis-suomalaisissa suhteissa 1899–1914*. (Nationalism and Revolution in Russo-Finnish Relations), passim.

118 Marine-Attaché für die Nordischen Reiche v. Hintze, an Seine Majestät den Kaiser

during the sailing season of 1906 to patrol the Finnish coasts to prevent further attempts at arms smuggling. The coastal waters of Finland were divided into three districts, the first one from Koivisto to Hanko, the second one consisting of Åland, the third one along the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia, while the fourth district was the Moon Sound on the Estonian side. In case of a popular rising, the first district was to support the advance of the first army corps from Viipuri towards Helsinki. About twenty minelayers, more than fifty torpedo boats, and numerous auxiliaries were available for guarding duties, while the two battleships and one cruiser formed a heavy detachment in reserve.¹¹⁹

Many of the patrol ships were based in the bay near Bomarsund and one battalion of infantry was positioned on Prästö,¹²⁰ ignoring the demilitarized status of the Åland archipelago. It was probably a penal battalion, but the purpose was to observe the Finns; foreign informants spoke about Russians constructing a *Zwingburg* on the island.¹²¹

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The list of prohibited contraband included arms, explosives, marine engines and parts, mines, barbed wire, fortification tools, field kitchens, telephone and telegraph materials, harnesses, corn and bread and preserves.¹²²

The plan was to declare the whole of the Gulf of Finland to be Russian territorial waters in order to have the right to stop and search any ship sailing there. This caused the Ministry of Foreign Affairs much difficulty, for they had to listen to ironic remarks about a blockade of one's own coasts, and in the end Izvol'skii succeeded in making the military desist from their plan.¹²³ As Russia regained

und König, 13. II 1908. Politisches Archiv, Auswärtiges Amt, Abt. I A, Russland 63, Akten betreffend die Aalandsinseln, Bd 2. von Hintze did not explain how he had acquired the protocol of the meeting.

119 RGAVMF, fond 418, opis' 2, delo 213 o sosredotochenii B. flota na sluchai mobilizatsii po planu n. 1, vooruzhennoe vosstanie v Finliandii. – The shipping lists and contraband lists were completed from to year, and it is not quite clear what exactly were included into them in 1906, 1907 and 1908.

120 RGAVMF, fond 418, opis' 1, delo 131, Strategicheskoe opisanie chasti Olandskikh shkher – Lumpanfierda i tablitsa rasstoianii mezhdu portami i lotsmanskami stantsiiami v Finskom i Botnicheskome zalivakh 27. XI – 1. XII 1906.

121 Shtab voisk Gvard. i S. Peterburgskago voennago okruga 19. V/1. VI 1906. KKK Da 215, n:o 3309, National Archives of Finland. A *Zwingburg* is a fortress or castle from which the surrounding hostile population can be dominated.

122 RGAVMF, fond 418, opis' 2, delo 213 o sosredotochenii B. flota na sluchai mobilizatsii po planu n. 1, vooruzhennoe vosstanie v Finliandii.

self-confidence, the navy started to plan flanking positions in Åland and in the Moon Sound. To their consternation, the Russians were reminded, by a loud protest from Stockholm, of the Paris Treaty of 1856, according to which the Åland archipelago was to remain demilitarized. Long and difficult diplomatic negotiations followed, involving not only Russia and Sweden, but also Germany, Britain, France, Denmark, Norway and the Netherlands, with practically no result, except that of frightening the Danes and Swedes and bringing them closer to the Germans. It was only when real war made treaties void that Russia could start fortifying the islands in 1915.¹²⁴

Britain and Japan were the enemies of Russia at sea. The Dual Alliance was directed against a German attack on either member, and also contained a guarantee against Russia being left alone to face a British naval attack, but the Anglo-French entente of 1904 made this aspect void. The renewal of the Anglo-Japanese alliance in 1905 caused another outburst of alarm in Russia and drove Nicholas II to sign a 'continental coalition' with William II of Germany. His signature was only with difficulty annulled by the united efforts of Witte and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Count Lambsdorff, who did not wish to antagonize France.

Germany continued her naval programmes, and Britain responded by building up a dreadnought fleet. British attention was now turning from the distant oceans to the North Sea. The British retained a theoretical interest in the Baltic, with a plan for a pre-emptive strike at Kiel or a landing on the Pomeranian coast followed by a march on Berlin, but in fact the Royal Navy soon realized that the Baltic would be a trap for them if Germany were able to close the Danish Straits. From the beginning, the British army planned to send their Expeditionary Corps to the French front.

After the defeat in Manchuria in 1905, Russia had to desist from further plans of expansion in Asia. Consequently, in 1907, the French succeeded in mediating an entente between Russia, Japan and Britain.

The German army had been perceived as the main opponent of the Russian land forces since the unification of the German principalities

123 Izvol'skii to Benckendorff 22. VI/ 5. VII 1906: Alexandre Isvolsky, *Au service de la Russie; Correspondance diplomatique*, recueillie par Hélène Isvolsky. Paris 1937.

124 see: Luntinen, *The Baltic Question 1903-1908*; Luntinen, "The Åland Question during the last years of the Russian Empire".

in 1871, but the German fleet had not played a great role in Russian naval calculations. And, in fact, the Germans were unable to undertake anything serious against the Russians on the Baltic Sea as long as the French fleet remained unbeaten. On the contrary, it was a Russian landing that was apprehended on the German coast, or a Russian demonstration in Danish waters, or an attack in the rear of the German North Sea fleet. Only after the French fleet had been destroyed could the Germans turn against the Russians, and even in a victorious battle they expected to lose approximately 30% of their strength; the only possible conclusion to be drawn was that the fleet should be constructed so powerful that the 70% left from the first battle would be strong enough for a duel with the Tsar's fleet. Then, after the entente of 1904, it was believed that the British would join the French, which meant that even fewer German forces could be left for the Baltic. The only chance was to pressure Denmark to close its Straits with mines, or to occupy the small neighbour and let the German navy carry out the mining. In the military plans for the Eastern front, the German army did not count on any naval support on the left flank, and was even ready to accept the destruction of small coastal towns like Wismar, Rostock, Lübeck or Stralsund by the Russian Baltic fleet.

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The transfer of the Russian fleet to the Far East in 1904-05 made the German position on the Baltic Sea easier. Then the obsolete coastal battleships of the *Siegfried* class could be trusted to defend the coast, though Libau remained a threat, because from there Russian torpedo boats could raid the German coasts.

These realistic views were so unpleasant to the staff of the German Baltic fleet that they drew up wishful plans for a battle against Russia alone. In them, a big German fleet could be concentrated in the Gulf of Finland, with a detachment to close the Gulf of Riga on the right flank. It was supposed that the Russians would passively retire behind the walls of their fortresses, but by disturbing their mobilization, destroying their merchant ships, and raiding their ports – Libau, Windau, Dünamunde, Pernau, Reval – the Germans should be able to provoke them into steaming into the open sea to be destroyed in a battle with the superior German fleet. The Finns could also be starved out by a naval blockade, or Helsinki could be bombarded and burnt – only 786 of its 4,960 houses were constructed of stone, the staff knew – so that public opinion would compel the Tsar's fleet to come out. After the battle, the German fleet could be dispersed in every necessary direction, to destroy Dünamunde, Riga, Libau, Reval, to prevent Russian commerce in the Gulf of Bothnia, to attack Turku, Pori, Vaasa, Pietarsaari, Kokkola, and Oulu, to mine waterways, to

capture Russian merchant ships, to destroy lighthouses, quays, and docks, to burn timber stores, to blow up railway bridges on coastal lines, and to cut the telegraph cables to Sweden.¹²⁵ But these remained sweet dreams, because Great-Power politics made impossible an isolated duel between the two Empires. Of course, no thought was given to the fact that all 'Russians' in the list to be destroyed were, in fact, Finns. In spite of all their efforts to increase their autonomy, in international law Finns remained the Tsar's subjects.

125 Operationspläne gegen Russland, vom Februar 1896 bis Aug. 1897, Bundesarchiv-Marinearchiv [BA-MA] RM 5/v 1628; Operationspläne gegen Russland in Europa vom März 1903 bis Juni 1913, BA-MA RM 5/v 1629; Russland, März 1882 – Juni 1883, BA-MA RM 5/v 1631; Vorarbeiten zu den Operations-Plänen gegen Russland, vom 15. Dezember 1892 bis Nov 1908, BA-MA RM 5/v 1632.

Preparing for a Great War

REVIVAL AND RENEWED REPRESSION

Tsarism revived

The Tsarist regime in Russia was badly shattered but not definitely destroyed by defeat and revolution in 1905–06.

After the Imperial Manifesto of on October 1905, order was restored, but the government remained on a narrow basis. Witte could not make the liberals join his government nor was he able to quell the continuing disorder in the provinces. Nor could he ever gain the trust of Nicholas II, who suspected him of an ambition to become the first president of a Russian republic. In 1906, Witte was replaced first by the hopeless Goremykin and then by Petr Stolypin, who succeeded in pacifying the country by punitive expeditions and expulsions to Siberia.

Stolypin, however, understood that the regime could not be based on force alone. The two first Duma elections in 1906 showed that neither Socialists nor dogmatic liberals nor national minorities were eager to make the existing Russia strong and united. Stolypin changed the election rules and succeeded in creating a majority of moderate Liberals and Nationalists in the third Duma of 1907–12, which was willing to support the government in its policy of modernizing, unifying and reforming the country.

For internal reforms, external peace was necessary. Plans for expansion were given up and Russia joined the entente in 1907, as shown above. A disturbing consequence was the German suspicion of a Franco-Anglo-Russian *Einkreisung* or encirclement.¹

¹ To counter this suspicion Russia proposed closing the Baltic against the British – and freeing Åland from the demilitarization servitude – but Germany could not

Stolypin detested the nationalities in Finland, the Baltic Provinces, Poland, the Ukraine, the Caucasus and Central Asia, probably not so much for nationalistic reasons but because their demands contradicted the idea of a united and centralized modern Russia. The problem was that half the population of the Empire was non-Russian and reacted to government policy, which was seen as Russification, with growing antipathy and hatred of Tsarism, of government, and, in the end, of anything Russian. Stolypin followed his nationalist policy in order also to appease the rightist and chauvinistic opposition in the Duma and to win the confidence of the Emperor.

Stolypin strongly objected to the Finnish idea of a separate statehood. After putting Russian affairs in order, in 1907 he turned his attention to the border country. A solution for the Finnish problem was urgently necessary because revolutionaries were hiding in Finland in the vicinity of the Imperial capital. Finnish law did not recognize revolutionary plotting as a crime, the Finnish police force did not want to co-operate with the Russian security forces, and Finnish Activists and the Left aided the revolutionaries.

The constitutionalist Mechelin Senate and their governors and courts of justice were not useful tools of central government policy. August Langhoff, a general of Finnish origin,² in the office of Minister State Secretary always tried to represent the constitutionalist point of view to the Emperor, and even Governor-General Gerard was apt to believe the reports of Finnish officials that no plots against the Imperial power existed in the country.

Stolypin had no experience of Finnish affairs and that is why he appointed a committee of experts in Finnish affairs to advise him. Thus old Bobrikovians like Deutrich, Borodkin, Sergeevskii and others regained some influence. These men were apt to see in Finnish separatism a mortal danger for Russian unity and the Russian political system, as well as for the dominant position of Russians in Russia.

The absence of Russian administration in Finland was harmful also from a military point of view.

be convinced; see: Luntinen, *The Baltic Question 1903-1908*.

2 Langhoff commanded the Finnish Guards Battalion in 1897, the Semenov Regiment in 1899 and a brigade in 1904, and was Minister State Secretary 1906-1913.

Quarrels about money and rules for the military

First, there were military-financial problems. The Finns were reluctant to pay for the costs of the conscription authorities and the gendarmerie in the country, regarding them as Imperial institutions which had no legal existence in Finland. In revenge, the army did not pay for the barracks and other property taken over from the disbanded Finnish battalions. These sums ranged from several hundred thousand to even a few million Finnish marks.

A bigger financial problem was the payment for 1906 and 1907 of ten million marks a year in lieu of the personal military service from which the Finns had been freed. After a long discussion on whether the millions were to be paid at all, the Finnish Parliament consented to the demand, because these sums had been promised in 1905. Parliament consented to pay 20 million marks, thus stretching its budgetary competence to cover the regular military revenue which had been disposed of by the monarch even in Swedish times before 1809, although it had been asked only for 3.6 millions from extraordinary tax revenues.

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The Minister of War, Roediger, and the Minister of Finance, Vladimir Kokovtsov, favoured accepting the payment, because in their opinion a few million marks were not worth a constitutional conflict, while the Bobrikovians opposed this kind of appeasement of the Finns. The Council of Ministers decided to accept the money, because the 3.6 millions were included in the decision, and the 16.4 millions could be regarded as taken from the funds at the monarch's disposal. At this stage, the Council of Ministers tried to avoid a conflict with public opinion in Finland.³

Then there were problems with the railways. The Finnish railways were of light construction, although of the identical 1.524 mm gauge of the Russian railways. For military transport, light rails had to be replaced with heavier material, bridges strengthened, and rolling stock prepared. The Finnish treasury had to pay for the improvements, one million marks for bridges, half a million for rolling stock, and three

3 All documents are in KKK 1907, II department, delo 8_2 C II, National Archives of Finland, especially: Zhurnal vysochaishe uchrezhdennago osobago soveshchaniia dlia obsuzhdeniia nekotorykh voprosov kasaiushchisia Velikago Kniazhestva Finliandskago; Zasedaniia 24 Noiabria i 21 Dekabria 1907 goda, ob uplate finliandskoiu kaznoiu gosudarstvennomu kaznacheistvu posobiia dlia voennia nuzhdy za 1906 i 1907 gody.

million for heavier rails.⁴

The railway line from Hämeenlinna and Tampere northwards to Vaasa and Oulu had been opposed by the military authorities because they deemed that the Swedes might use it for an advance southward from the border to the rear of the Russian troops in Finland. Nevertheless, thanks to their autonomy, the Finns had succeeded in obtaining the Emperor's signature to their proposal, and eventually the line had been constructed, in 1883 to Vaasa, in 1886 to Oulu, and in 1903 to Tornio. In fact, in 1914–17 the railway proved useful for the Russian army.

The eastern branch line to Karelia, to Joensuu in 1894 and further on to Nurmes in 1911, also called forth apprehensions, because it strengthened Finnish economic and cultural influence in the region close to the Finnish–Russian border, and even increased a supposed Pan-Finnish danger in Russian Karelia.⁵

The gravest military problem was the fact that the Finnish trunk railway lay too close to the southern coast; in particular the railway bridges over the great waterways at Kymijoki and Viipuri could easily be cut by an enemy raid. The military authorities demanded another transverse line to be constructed in the interior, out of enemy reach. Finns deemed such a line to be of little economic sense, but under military pressure a line from St Petersburg via Elisenvaara, Pieksämäki and Haapamäki to Vaasa slowly took form. The last link was completed in 1917, at the end of the Russian period in Finnish history.⁶

Further problems were created by the question of local administration in the vicinity of the fortresses, because the reach of modern guns made necessary extending the fortress esplanades from a few hundred feet to several miles, covering inhabited areas especially around Sveaborg and Viipuri.

The Imperial rules for the administration of fortress districts and of areas under martial law, giving the fortress commandant or military

4 Spravka o raskhodakh finliandskoi kazny na soedinitelnuiu vetv mezhdu finliandskimi i imperskimi zheleznymi dorogami a takzhe na pereustroistvo dorog dlia propuska imperskago podvizhnago sostava. KKK 1914, II department, delo 91, National Archives of Finland.

5 Therefore crossing the border between Finland and the East Karelian *gubernii* was limited, and primary schools and libraries, established by a Finnish-Karelian society, were closed down by order of Imperial authorities.

6 For railway questions, see: Polvinen, *Die finnischen Eisenbahnen in den militärischen und politischen Plänen Russlands vor den ersten Weltkrieg*.

commander extraordinary administrative authority, which had also been extended by Bobrikov to cover Finland, were ignored by the Finns. Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolaevich, commander of the Guards troops and of the St Petersburg military district, chairman of the Committee of Imperial Defence, asked the Governor-General, in 1906, to make public the rules in due order and thus make them legally binding.⁷

Mechelin's Senate declared that Bobrikov's order had been annulled together with all other illegal decrees by the Manifesto of November 1905. The right of Finnish citizens to live and build houses anywhere in the country could not be limited by any orders or decrees without due constitutional legislation.

Governor-General Gerard explained to the military authorities that it would be preferable to desist from an immediate proclamation of the rules because it would provoke agitation in a country only precariously pacified after the disorder of 1905. It was true that the matter was one of all-Imperial military concern, but this did not mean that local circumstances should be totally ignored, said Gerard.

The Grand Duke answered angrily that it was the non-proclamation of the rules that was illegal, and that he could not allow defence needs to be submitted to the decision of the local Senate. He was responsible for the security of the fortresses and of the Imperial capital and had to insist on the proclamation.⁸

The Minister of War, Roediger, declared that imperial laws did not require any adaptation to local rules and that the Emperor's military authority must be in force everywhere in the Empire, Finland included, because the border country was an indivisible part of the realm.⁹

Thus the question of fortress districts or esplanades led into the

7 Instruktssiia opredel'aiushchaia otnosheniia gorodskikh i selskikh poselenii Sveaborgskago krepostnago raiona, a takzhe politsii onykh, k komendantu Sveaborgskoi kreposti; Sveaborg commandant to the Governor-General 9/22. IX 1904, 28. III/10. IV 1905; Viipuri commandant to Governor General 28. XII 1904/10. I 1905, KKK 1905, II department, delo 7.XIV 4; Governor-General Gerard to the Senate 14. III/1. III 1906 (includes the Grand Ducal order), KKK 1906, 2. department, delo XIV G(B), National Archives of Finland.

8 Zapiska po delu ob utverzhdenii plan granits krepostnykh raionov Sveaborgskoi i Vyborgskoi krepostei 15. XI 1906; correspondence between Gerard and Nicholas Nicolaevich in June – December 1906, KKK 1906, 2. department, delo XIV G(B), National Archives of Finland.

9 Correspondence between the Senate and Minister State Secretary 1907–1908: KKK 1907, I department, delo 45, National Archives of Finland.

major problem of legislating for Finland in questions of an all-imperial interest. Contemporary Finns were well aware of the forces grouping against them: "Anti-Finnish feeling is being fomented in military circles close to the Grand Duke Nicholas. The statement of the Senate on the fortress esplanade question has made the Grand Duke angry."¹⁰

A similar problem, important mainly from a standpoint of principle, but also with a practical aspect, was the question of military assistance to civilian authorities in keeping order. Earlier, in the extremely rare cases where such assistance had been necessary, the civilian authority in question had asked for it from the nearest garrison. During the general strike of 1905, the disadvantage of the system had been demonstrated: in the absence of civilian demand, the military had been unable, though, in fact, also afraid, to intervene in the disorder. The constitutionalist Senate would have liked to keep to the old rules, but Russian commanders wanted the authority to intervene on their own initiative. They did not trust the constitutionalist governors nor the police officers, who might use the Imperial army for their own party purposes, or, on the other hand, they might be reluctant to resort to military assistance, and the army would again be compelled to remain a bystander in the midst of grave revolutionary disorder.

In February 1906, new rules for military assistance in keeping order had been issued in Russia (and applied on thousands of occasions). Nicholas Nicholaevich and Roediger demanded similar rules for Finland, too, and again the Senate resorted to delaying tactics. It was only in 1909 that they answered that the rules of 1906 could not be applied in Finland, because all-Imperial legislation for Finland had been annulled in 1905; if necessary, they explained, the rules should be approved by the Finnish Parliament in due constitutional order.¹¹ Of course, this opinion was not accepted by the government; the Imperial army could not follow different rules in different corners of the Empire. In 1913, when the 'separatist' regime in Finland had been replaced by a collaborationist one, a problem still remained: proclaiming the rules would imply that they had not been in force from the very beginning in 1906, while without a proclamation Finns would not know the law. In the end, the Russian law of 1906 was

10 Hultin, *Päiväkirjani kertoo*, vol. I, s. 412. (Diary of H.).

11 For the correspondence on this, see: KKK 1906, I department, delo 46_07, KKK 1907, I department, delo 46-07, National Archives of Finland.

published in the Finnish official collection of decrees and laws.¹²

Together, these questions made a strong case against Finnish self-government from the military point of view. There were plenty of practical security considerations, too.

Security problems and constitutional pretexts

According to gendarme reports, only a completely naive person could believe that the *Voima*, the armed Activist organization, had ceased to exist when ordered to be dissolved by the Mechelin Senate. Informers knew that arms smuggling continued, machine guns were hidden, fire brigades and police detachments were secretly receiving military training in shooting, skiing, and orienteering, a boy-scout organization was being established in the country to foster physical and patriotic training. Even the Salvation Army aroused suspicions; at least a report on it was drawn up in conjunction with other security problems.

The gendarme informants even knew the war plan of the rebels: the rising was to start in the north, the front was to be on the Tampere–Kuopio–Joensuu line, with Vaasa, Oulu and Kemi as rear bases, and the headquarters in Tampere. The rebels had already contacted the Socialist Revolutionaries to co-ordinate common action. When foreign danger or internal disorder drew Russia's attention and forces elsewhere, Russia was to be presented with an ultimatum for greater rights for Finland. The Russian garrisons, dispersed far from each other in the country, were to be disarmed, and then a two-pronged attack would be launched in the Viipuri–St Petersburg direction and towards the south coast, where the garrison of Sveaborg would rise in revolt.¹³

The informers calculated that the old Finnish army had trained

12 Zhurnal Vysochaishe uchrezhdennago Osobago Soveshchaniia po delam Velikago Kniazhestva Finliandskago 4. III 1913, po proektu pravil o prizyve voisk dlia sodeistviia grazhdanskim vlastiam; Spravka k vsepoddanneisheму predstavleniiu Imperatorskago Finliandskago Senata s proektom ob izmenenii deistvuiushchikh pravil o prizyve voisk dlia sodeistviia grazhdanskim vlastiam, KKK 1912, I department, delo 17–6; Osobyi Zhurnal Soveta Ministrov 22. VIII 1913, I department, delo 17–3. National Archives of Finland.

13 KKK Hd 79, n:o 2, Politicheskoe polozhenie v krae i vyzvannia im mery dlia okhranenie gosudarstvennago poriadka i obshchestvennago poriadka; KKK Hd 87, n:o 1, delo Voimy; KKK hd 103 n:o 103, sovershenno sekretnaia zapiska o vooruzhenii Finliandii 1911–1912 gg. National Archives of Finland.

33,000 men in active service and 160,000 men in the reserve, and in addition there were the men trained by the *Voima*. If the age classes of the twenty to forty year olds consisted of 390,000 men, and if half of them could be supposed to be fit for fighting, the Finnish forces would be 200,000 strong. Some of the writers saw these forces as a united army, others discerned a Red and a White Guard, a few informants invented even a Blue Guard.¹⁴

The danger of a domino effect also haunted the keepers of order. If the Finns should acquire their 'rights', nothing would prevent Georgians, Poles, Armenians and who knows what Karakalpathians from demanding similar privileges. If the Finns were allowed their separate army, then Estonian-Livonian, Polish-Lithuanian and Khokholian¹⁵ armies would be formed. Instead of the one and indivisible Russian Empire, a "Disunited States of East Europe" would be born. The danger might be even greater: on all Finnish maps the St Petersburg *guberniia* was called *Inkeri* (Ingria), Pan-Finnish propaganda was being spread into neighbouring regions, and fraternization with the Estonians took place at song festivals. Plans for a Pan-Fennic empire from the Gulf of Bothnia to the Pacific Ocean were only waiting for the emergence of a Finnish Alexander the Great for their realization.¹⁶ These fears were probably held only by the most nervous of Russian chauvinists, but even serious officials were apprehensive of the Finnish belief that they were chosen by God to teach and unite other Fenno-Ugric peoples.¹⁷

The gendarme reports led to an interpellation in the Imperial Duma in the spring of 1908. Rightist and Nationalist deputies asked what the government knew of these plans and what it was doing to avoid the danger. Was it true that the Finnish *Voima* was arming in order to separate the border country from the Empire, and that revolutionaries were protected in Finland, all with the knowledge of local officials?¹⁸

Questions of security and Imperial integrity were of essential concern for Stolypin, even if he was not directly responsible for

14 Kamenskii, *Sovremennoe polozhenie v Finliandii s tochski zreniia oborony gosudarstva*; Rumiantsev, *Finliandiia vooruzhaetsia*; Borodkin, *Itogi stoletia*.

15 A pet or pejorative name for Ukrainians.

16 Kamenskii, *Sovremennoe polozhenie v Finliandii...* p. 31, 52, 63.

17 Gerard to the Ministry of Interior 27. XII 1907/9. I 1908, KKK Dd 5, National Archives of Finland.

18 Gosudarstvennaia Duma, Tretii sozyv, Sessia 1, chast' 2, zasedanie shestidesiatoe. Stenograficheskii otchet 5. V 1908, p. 2913-18.

military matters. In order to maintain or to regain the confidence of the Emperor and the court, he also had to take into account the Emperor's annoyance at the careless Finnish attitude towards the Russian revolutionaries and the restrictive interpretation of Nicholas's Imperial authority in the Grand Duchy. The military point of view was expressed at the highest level by Nicholas Nicholaevich.¹⁹ Anti-Finnish opinions were echoed by the chauvinist publications and organizations of the extreme Right, for example, the "United Nobility of Russia" and the "Society of the Russian People", which contemporary Finns suspected of close ties with the police, army leadership, and the court.²⁰ Policy towards Finland was not formed independently of internal Russian politics; it reflected the varying strengths of authoritarian and moderate liberal tendencies,²¹ but this fact did not invalidate the security cares of the military staffs.

Stolypin concluded that Finland really was a problem, from the point of view of Imperial unity and Russian national domination. The Finnish administration could not be trusted because they were separatists and blind to legitimate Imperial interests.

Military plans could not be made against foreign enemies alone in these revolutionary times. Admiral Shcheglov declared that the first task of the armed forces was to keep the Baltic and Finnish provinces peaceful in order to secure the Imperial capital. According to a hastily sketched plan in 1906, similar to that of the autumn of 1905, in case of a rebellion, the troops in Finland were to be reinforced to their full wartime strength, and an expeditionary detachment from the Guards units in peacetime strength was to be sent to the Isthmus.²²

Because of the reported existence and growth of the Finnish *Voima*, more detailed military plans were necessary for putting down a rising.²³ In January and February 1907, high-level meetings were held to discuss the necessary measures. In case of trouble, a state of war

19 Boeckmann to Gerard 31. I 1907, KKK 1907, I department, delo XX, National Archives of Finland.

20 Adolf Törngren (a semi-official Constitutionalist observer in St Petersburg) to the Senate 12. IV 1907, p. 290-96.

21 Kujala, *Venäjän hallituksen suunnitelmat Suomen palauttamisesta järjestykseen vuosina 1907-1914*. (The Plans of the Russian government for the Restoration of Order in Finland).

22 Mery po obezpechenii gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti. Sovershenno sekretno. Hd 14, n:o 6, KKK, National Archives of Finland.

23 Shatsillo, *Russkii imperializm i razvitie flota 1906-1914*, pp. 87-88.

was to be declared in Finland. A commander-in-chief was to be appointed to command all troops, ships, border guards, the pilot and lighthouse organization and the customs services in the country. All contact between Finns and foreign countries were to be cut and wireless stations were to be controlled by the military. Russian courts martial, acting according to Russian laws, were to take over juridical tasks in the country.²⁴

In April 1907, a Finnish observer²⁵ in St Petersburg informed the Finnish Senate of rumours according to which many military commanders were talking about a forthcoming reconquest of Finland, with the purpose of returning to the Bobrikov regime. The first necessity was to replace Gerard with a more accommodating man, and Deutrich had suggested inviting Seyn back from Grodno to the post. The Emperor believed that a victory of the conciliatory Old Finnish party in the forthcoming first democratic elections (in the summer 1907) would prove that the common people favoured Tsarism, after which Mechelin and Gerard could be dismissed.²⁶

There is no hint in the available documents of the reason why no steps were taken in the spring of 1907. Törnngren, the observer cited above, explained that the Senate sent a report of 150 pages denying the existence of the *Voima*, and with its aid the Minister State Secretary Langhoff was able to calm the Emperor down.

To counter this, in the summer of 1907 the Emperor received fresh information about preparations for a Finnish revolution, and the result of the elections was no confirmation of the dogma of a popular monarchism. It is true that the Old Finns, the party of appeasement, won 59 seats, while the Constitutionalists were left with 50 (26 Young Finns, 24 Swedish), and 9 Agrarian deputies. It is also true that the common people voted eagerly, but they voted for the Social Democrats, who got 80 deputies in the Diet or Parliament, with even women among them.

Thus, in the autumn, it seemed that the planned military measures had to be taken. Now, the plan was to declare martial law only in the county or *guberniia* of Viipuri, the worst infected by the

24 Nicholas II to Stolypin 30. I 1907 (invitation to the meeting). *Krasnyi Arkhiv* V/1924, p. 107; *Zhurnal Vysochaishe uchrezhdennago osobago soveshchaniia* 1. II 1907. Hd 14, n:o 6, KKK, National Archives of Finland.

25 See supra, Törnngren.

26 Nicholas II to Stolypin in the letters cited below.

revolutionaries. The commander of the 22nd Army Corps Vladimir Boeckmann was to be appointed commander-in-chief of the operation, and Seyn was to be called back from Grodno to the post of Deputy Governor-General. The idea was that when Gerard learned of this unwanted aide, he would be offended and would demand permission to leave his post. Seyn would then govern the country, while Boeckmann pacified the Viipuri region and purged it of revolutionaries.

Nicholas II was very much annoyed when the plan was leaked to the press. The revolutionaries hiding in Finland took the warning and escaped abroad. Perhaps also the measures which the Mechelin Senate was frightened enough finally to take against the Russian revolutionaries weakened the pretext for military measures. Perhaps Stolypin was afraid of difficulties with the moderate Duma majority.²⁷ No state of war was declared but Seyn was appointed Deputy Governor-General, Gerard was humiliated and asked to resign, and was replaced by Boeckmann in February 1908. Lieutenant General Olkhovskii was then appointed to be Boeckmann's successor as commander of the 22nd Army Corps.

The planning for martial law for Finland went on as well as preparations for transferring additional troops to the Viipuri region.²⁸ Stolypin stressed the fact that the Emperor had decided that if the Finns should go on breaking the law, measures would be taken *manu militari*, but he hoped that things were turning out for the better.²⁹

They did not. In February 1908, Stolypin had to remind Edvard Hjelt, a Finnish politician, that the government could not allow Finns to go on granting asylum to Russian revolutionaries; if this was not stopped, the whole country would be put under a state of siege.³⁰

Mechelin prepared another unpleasant surprise for Stolypin. In paying the twenty million marks for 1906 and 1907 in lieu of Finnish military service, the Senate reminded the Imperial Government of the necessity of ending the unconstitutional situation. The Senate

27 Kujala, *Venäjän hallituksen suunnitelmat Suomen palauttamisesta järjestykseen vuosina 1907-1914*, p. 292.

28 Nicholas II to Stolypin 11. XI, 12. XI, 1. XII 1907, Krasnyi Arkhiv 5/1924 – It is a pity that only one half of the correspondence was published by the editors of Krasnyi Arkhiv, but Nicholas's letters are clear enough as to the main points of the plot.

29 Stolypin to Nicholas II 22. XII 1907, Krasnyi Arkhiv V(XXX)/1928 p. 80.

30 Hjelt, *Finlands självständighet*, pp. 199–200.

understood that some all-Imperial points of view had to be taken into account, but in their opinion Finns could well serve in an army of their own as decreed in 1878, if only it were to be organized, trained and armed identically with the Russian army.³¹

Both Governor-General Boeckmann and Prime Minister Stolypin were ignorant of this initiative and learned of it only from the newspapers³² – of course, because according to the Finnish constitution the matter did not fall within their competence. On the other hand, the Council of Ministers stated that military matters were not included in the authority of the local Senate or Diet or any local institution; and the Emperor had already, in 1906, decided that the separate Finnish army was not to be restored.³³

The Senate's proposal was another reason for the interpellation of the Rightist and Nationalist groups in the Imperial Duma in May 1908. They asserted that in 1878 Mechelin had been scheming for a separate Finnish army, and that when those schemes had been negated in 1901, he and his party had resorted to passive resistance, while the *Voima* had started preparing armed resistance under the protection of the Finnish administration.³⁴

Stolypin, to whom the interpellation was not unpleasant, and probably not unexpected, answered that Finland was indeed a problem. Strict measures against the recalcitrant and indolent administration were necessary, but the problem went deeper. The Finns believed that Finland was a separate state, although in fact it was a Russian province, admittedly with its own internal laws and administration. He was not going to reduce Finland's legal rights but only to extend the authority of the Imperial Government to this border country, in which task he hoped for the support of the patriotic elements in the Duma.³⁵

31 Senate to the Governor General 11. V 1908, further to Stolypin 9/22. V 1908. KKK 1908, II department, Delo 38/1908, National Archives of Finland.

32 Stolypin to Boeckmann 23. IV 1908, Boeckman to the Senate 21. IV/4. V 1908. KKK 1908, 2. department, delo 38, National Archives of Finland.

33 Osobyi Zhurnal Soveta Ministrov 11. VI 1908 po vsepoddanneishemu predstavleniiu Imperatorskago Finliandskago Senata o priniatii Ego Imperatorskim Velichestvom pochina k razresheniiu, v ustanovlennom osnovnami zakonami poriadke, voprose o vozstanovlenii finskikh voisk i o predostanovlenii Senatu vyrabotat', v vide podgotovlennykh mer, vsepoddanneishii po semu predmetu proekt. KKK 1908, II department, delo 38/1908, National Archives of Finland.

34 Gosudarstvennaia Duma, tretii sozyv, sessiia 1, chast 2, zasedanie 5. V 1908, Stenograficheskii otchet pp. 2913–18, 2945–58.

35 Gosudarstvennaia Duma, pp. 2923–39.

The first step was to prevent the Senate from transgressing its authority. In June 1908, an order was given to submit all Finnish affairs to the Council of Ministers, instead of only to the Finnish Minister State Secretary, before referring them to the Emperor.

Mechelin saw that no chance existed of making the Russian government respect the Finnish constitution and asked to be allowed to resign, a request to which the Emperor graciously consented. Mechelin was replaced with the more moderate Edvard Hjelt.

The necessity for military intervention still remained. When, in 1870, the Finnish railway trunk line had been brought to St Petersburg, no connecting line over the River Neva had been constructed. Bobrikov had stressed the importance of avoiding the costly and time-consuming detraining in the Nikolaev station in the capital, the march through the city, and boarding another train in the Finland station. The money had been promised by the Senate, but not paid. In 1907, Stolypin reminded the Finns of the railway bridge over the Neva,³⁶ and a year later, the Ministry of Finance demanded the Finnish financial contribution for the project. In August 1908, the Senate asked for an Imperial proposal for including the Neva bridge millions in the budget for the year 1909. Stolypin was angry at this move, because the Senate was evidently trying to divert another question of Imperial military importance into the sphere of Finnish legislation. He ordered the payment, without any further constitutional pretexts, of 2.5 million roubles or 6.67 million marks to the Imperial treasury.³⁷

Hjelt and his Senate did not obey, and the Diet took the matter under consideration without a due Imperial proposal. The Constitutionalists declared that no Finnish public money could be spent without being included in the budget and approved by the Diet.³⁸ The conciliatory Old Finns explained that the matter should not be made a cause of a constitutional conflict, because the money had been

36 Osobyi zhurnal Soveta Ministrov 27. III 1907. KKK 1908, IV department, delo 4-1, National Archives of Finland.

37 Kokovtsov to Langhoff 6. III 1908, Stolypin to Boeckmann 12. VII 1908, Stolypin to Boeckmann 21. VIII 1908, Boeckmann to Stolypin 25. VIII 1908, Stolypin to Boeckmann 12. IX 1908, Stolypin to Langhoff 12. IX 1908, Boeckmann to Stolypin 19. IX/2. X 1908, Stolypin to Boeckmann 29. IX 1908, Langhoff to Boeckmann 27. IX/10. X 1908. KKK 1908, IV department, delo 4-1, National Archives of Finland.

38 Toiset valtiopäivät 1908, Asiakirjat I, n:o 8, Valtiovarainvaliokunnan mietintö, Vastalauseita. (Parliamentary documents).

promised in 1904, nor should the question be officially taken up without the Imperial consent. The Social Democrats declared that they opposed any military expenditure, but desisted from the official discussion – they always tried to avoid provoking the Imperial authorities to take measures such as were taken in Russia against the Labour movement. As a result of the way the Old Finns and Socialists voted, the matter was not put on the official agenda, the Constitutionalists were defeated, and the conflict was thus avoided this time.³⁹ The millions for the Neva bridge were paid in December 1908,⁴⁰ and the bridge was completed in 1913, nowadays called *Finliandskii zheleznodorozhnyi most*.

Professor Behrendts, a member of Stolypin's advisory committee on Finnish questions, explained that until 1878 the Finns had paid military expenditure as ordered by the Emperor. Thereafter the Diet had tried to reduce the Imperial prerogatives especially in financial questions, resorting to a reinterpretation of ancient Swedish constitutions in order to establish parliamentarism, leaving with very little power to the Emperor or the Russian government.⁴¹

Before the decision of the Diet, Governor-General Boeckmann had been nervous and stayed up until five o'clock in the morning at which point he was happy to learn of the Diet's decision to desist from conflict. Stolypin had said to Hjelt that the Finns would be regarded as rebels should they not pay the Neva millions, and had threatened "we have the military force and the fortresses".⁴² Hjelt concluded that the 'dark forces', i.e. the Bobrikovian counsellors of Stolypin, had been eager to regard refusal as a rebellion and a pretext for military measures to make an end of Finnish autonomy and separatism.⁴³

The Finnish military tribute regulated

As yet the question of Finnish military service remained without a definite solution. Several Imperial institutions declared that the Finns should be made to serve in the Imperial army and navy but, because

39 Toiset valtiopäivät 1908, Pöytäkirjat, pp. 2164–2258. (Parliamentary protocols).

40 Senate to Boeckmann 2. XI 1908. KKK 1908, IV department, delo 4–1, National Archives of Finland.

41 Berendts, *Kratkii Oчерk biudzhethnago prava Finliandii*.

42 Hjelt, *Vaiherikkailta vuosilta*, vol. I, pp. 199–200 (memoirs of H.).

43 Hjelt, *Vaiherikkailta vuosilta*, vol. I, pp. 199–200, 228–29.

it was not yet timely, they were to continue paying the ten million annual marks instead.

Stolypin, Kokovtsov and Roediger agreed,⁴⁴ only remarking that the sum of ten millions was much less than the benefit to the Finns by their freedom from personal military service. In addition, the Finns ought to have contributed as well to the Imperial financial burden for defence, though it was difficult to calculate the total amount of benefit which Finland enjoyed as part of the Empire, for instance, its share in the costs of the court, diplomatic representation, navy, etc. The levelling up of the financial military burden was still being assessed in detail and no definite sum was ever agreed on, but, for example, General Zolotarev of the statistical department of the General Staff, calculated that Finland ought to have participated in Imperial military expenditure to the extent of 45,413,000 roubles or more than 100,000,000 marks.⁴⁵

Now, in 1909, no proposal for the military millions were presented to the Finnish Diet, the payment was simply to be taken from the regular income of the Finnish state.⁴⁶ The Senate had lost all hope for a separate Finnish army, but they still wished to be allowed to pay the money in due constitutional form. In March, they asked for an Imperial proposal to be put before the Diet concerning the annual payments, but the only answer was that an Imperial decision was soon to be given on the question.⁴⁷ The Council of Ministers once more explained that military matters did not fall within the jurisdiction of local authorities, that the Emperor had ordered the payment of ten million marks for each of the years 1908 and 1909 to be taken from

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44 Stolypin to Kokovtsov 30. VII 1907, Roediger to Langhoff 7. VIII 1907, Stolypin to Roediger 17. VIII 1907. KKK 1907, II department, delo 8–2 C II, National Archives of Finland.

45 Zapiska general-leitenanta Zolotareva o finansovoi polozenie Finliandii 30. IV 1910. Tsentralnyi Gosudarstvennyi Voenno-Istoricheskii Arkhiv SSSR, fond 586/Microfilm NL 172, National Archives of Finland.

46 Zhurnal Vysochaishe uchrezhdennago Osobago Soveshchaniia po delam Velikago Kniazhestva Finliandskago 20. VI i 30. X 1908. KKK 1908, IV department, delo 37, National Archives of Finland. – Gendarme spies reported from Finland that the monetary tribute would not cause insuperable difficulties, while compulsory personal military service in the Russian army could lead to serious agitation. It seems that they always reported what was asked of them. Svodka svedeniia iz Finliandii 5. I 1909. KKK 1909, I department, delo XXII–2, National Archives of Finland.

47 Senaatin talousosaston pöytäkirja 2. III 1909. (Senate protocol, translated into Russian). KKK 1910, II department, delo 12 – B, National Archives of Finland.

the regular income in 1910, and that, for later years, a sum growing annually by one million was to be collected by taxation. Nicholas II signed a manifesto decreeing all this on 7 October 1909.⁴⁸

Nevertheless, the Senate still discussed the military question. They did not deny the duty of Finns to participate Imperial defence; they only stressed that the decision belonged to the Diet, without whose consent the payment would be illegal. The Diet also protested; questions of military service and taxation could only be regulated through a decision of Parliament, which would then be approved by the monarch. The unilateral Imperial manifesto had no constitutional existence, and no money could be legally transferred on its basis.

Because the protest had no effect, the Finnish senators, in the end even the most conciliatory ones, resigned.⁴⁹ The protesting Diet was dissolved.⁵⁰

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Thus the military question led to an irreparable constitutional conflict. Finnish self-government was not totally abolished, however, because administering the innumerable minute details of local life would have caused too much trouble to the government in St Petersburg. Because no responsible Finnish politicians wanted to collaborate with the Imperial government, and an insufficient number of Russian officials knew the circumstances and languages of the border country, Finnish-born but Russified officials, most of them admirals and generals, were collected from all over the Empire⁵¹ and appointed Senators in Helsinki, initially under the chairmanship of Lieutenant General Vladimir Markov.

A reliable Governor-General, at last

However, the situation was not a satisfactory one. Gendarme information on the *Voima* was being transmitted in ever growing frequency

48 Langhoff to Governor-General 29. IX/12. X 1909, Governor-General to Stolypin 12/21. X 1909, Langhoff to Governor-General 17. X/1. XI 1909, KKK 1909, IV department, delo 8 – 2, 26; National Archives of Finland. The manifest published in Asetuskokoelma 1909 n:o 59 (Collection of published laws and decrees).

49 Senate to the Emperor 25. IX 1909, Stolypin to Governor-General 21. IX 1909, KKK 1909, IV department, delo 8 – 2, National Archives of Finland.

50 Toiset valtiopäivät 1909, Pöytäkirjat p. 1297, 1315, 1844, Asiakirjat, perustuslakivaliokunnan mietintö n:o 3, Vastalauseet (Parliamentary protocols, committee documents).

51 Polivanov, *Memuary*, p. 80.

and was of an ever more alarming content. Japanese spies were reported travelling in Finland, Mechelin was visiting the Japanese legation in Stockholm, an unknown Japanese took part in a meeting of the *Voima*, and maps of Kronstadt had been stolen for the Japanese. The Emperor wrote in the margin of the report: "The Finnish Governor-General should be informed of the Japanese espionage".⁵² Boeckmann answered that without any doubt the information was correct since it had been deemed worthy of being brought to the Emperor's knowledge, but Finnish courts demanded evidence before passing any sentence.⁵³ Quite clearly the General did not believe the reports, and to the Finns he declared that as far as he was concerned, their constitution would be honoured.⁵⁴

Thus Boeckmann, who with fire and sword had put down the rebellion in the Baltic provinces, proved an unsatisfactory Governor-General in Finland. He did not perceive any danger of rebellion in the country, but only a people striving to preserve their constitutional rights, which the Emperor had sworn to uphold. He did not want to provoke a conflict nor to resort to extraordinary measures against his peaceful wards.⁵⁵ The General thus turned out to be no improvement on Gerard, at least in the light cast by the spies, and Finns were convinced that "Seyn's intrigues with the gendarmes against Gerard and Boeckman... were the principal reason for the fall" of the two governor-generals.⁵⁶ Later, Boeckmann said to Hjelt that Seyn's schemes had caused his dismissal.⁵⁷ Seyn's complicity in the gendarme reports cannot be proved, but he referred them to the Council of Ministers without protest, though it is difficult to believe that he did not know that most of them were imaginary. Provocation and false denouncements were normal methods in the Russian security service.

Seyn was appointed Governor-General of Finland on 11 November 1909. Now, at last, the border country was taken firmly into the hands

52 Chief of the General Staff to Boeckmann 16. X 1909. KKK 1910, I department, delo XLVI, National Archives of Finland.

53 Boeckmann to Stolypin 25. X/5. XI 1909. KKK 1910, I department, delo XLVI, National Archives of Finland.

54 The Governor-General's answer to an address of the Kotka town councillors 21. VI/4. VII 1909. KKK 1909, II department, n:o 11 b, National Archives of Finland.

55 Boeckmann to Stolypin 28. XII 1908/2. I 1909, 11. II 1909, 20. II/5. III 1909, I department, delo XLVI, National Archives of Finland.

56 *Suomalainen Kansa* 1. II 1909. (a newspaper cutting in KKK 1908, I department, delo XVIII-7, National Archives of Finland).

57 Hjelt, *Finlands självständighet*, vol. I, p. 275.

of the central government. As distinct from the previous Governors-Generals, who were the Emperor's personal representatives, Seyn served on a lower level, as a tool of the Council of Ministers. In time, he succeeded in purging the local administration of the most recalcitrant constitutionalists; after the Senators, Governors were replaced by Russians or Russified Finns. Seyn had difficulties similar to those of Bobrikov in finding collaborators for lower offices, and in particular the courts of justice were able to continue their 'politicking', which they called constitutional passive resistance. However, for a while, no mass opposition movement emerged comparable to that which had produced the addresses of 1899–1901 or the strike of 1902–04 against conscription because Seyn was cautious enough to avoid measures which would have provoked such general dissatisfaction in Finland, though he had to be strict enough in order not to lose the confidence of the Emperor and the support of the radical reactionaries.

Imperial interests secured

The next step on the way to bringing the border country closer to the other parts of the Empire was taken in 1910, when a procedure for legislation in Finland in matters of Imperial interest was re-introduced, recalling the policy of 1899.⁵⁸ Such laws were to be initiated by the Imperial government, never by the Finns. The Finnish Senate and Diet were to be consulted, and then the proposal was to be discussed and decided by the Imperial Duma and Imperial Council, and finally accepted or vetoed by the Emperor. Finns were given two seats in the Imperial Council and four in the Duma, but the seats were never occupied because the Imperial legislative authorities had no existence in the Finnish constitution.

Stolypin and the majority of the Council of Ministers were of the opinion that Finnish autonomy was not reduced by the reform. What was curbed was the Finnish tendency to usurp authority in Imperial questions. The proposal was intended to strengthen the Russian state, and desisting from it would imply weakness and would diminish respect for Russia abroad.⁵⁹

58 Seyn's view on the Finnish question is in a report entitled: *Politicheskoe polozhenie v krae i vyzvannia im mery dlia gosudarstvennogo spokoistviia*. KKK Hd 99, National Archives of Finland.

59 *Osobyi Zhurnal Soveta Ministrov* 22. II 1910. KKK 1910, I department, delo 18

Nicholas II explained to Langhoff that he was sorry to annoy his Finnish subjects, but he had to take the interest of the whole Empire into account.⁶⁰

Finns never acknowledged the diktat; they only saw that their constitution was being broken, and they felt they were living under oppression. Seyn explained that they were already so full of hatred that the new law could not increase their animosity any more.⁶¹

Again, first in the list of matters of Imperial concern was Finnish military service.⁶² In 1910, the re-elected Diet tried to obstruct a further transfer of Finnish money for military purposes by budgeting more money for education and communications. The Russified Senate prohibited such waste and sent the eleven millions then due to the Imperial treasury.

To make an end of such repeated obstruction, the Council of Ministers decided to regulate the military payment by the new procedure decreed in 1910. Thus the Emperor and the Council of Ministers could be spared the trouble of a special manifesto each year.⁶³

It was again declared that Finnish personal military service was inopportune, because the percentage of 'alien races' in the army already surpassed 25% and there was no reason to increase it by drafting ill-disposed men, who, after their service, would enter the reserve of the *Voima*. Because of the separatist tendencies in the border country and its vicinity close to the Imperial capital, it was best for Russia to be content with a financial contribution instead of military service.

According to the proposal, the Finnish state was to pay 12 million for 1911 and then one million more for every year until in 1919 the

I, National Archives of Finland.

60 Langhoff, *Seitsemän vuotta Suomen edustajana valtaistuimen edessä*, pp. 302, 308. (Memoirs of L. as Minister State Secretary).

61 *Osobyi Zhurnal Soveta Ministrov* 22. II 1910. KKK 1910, I department, delo 18 I, National Archives of Finland.

62 *Zhurnal Vysochaishe uchrezhdennoi Komissii dlia vyrabotki proekta pravil o pordiadka izdaniia kazaiushchikhsia Finliandii zakonov obshchegosudarstvennogo snachenii*. KKK 1910, I department, delo 18-1. National Archives of Finland.

63 *O nekotorykh merakh, sviazannykh s izdaniem zakona 17 iul'ia 1910 goda ob obshchegosudarstvennym zakonodatel'stve; O proizvodstve finliandskoiu kaznoi denezhnykh platezhakh Gosudarstv. kaznacheistvu vzamen otbyvaniia finliandsami lichnoi povinnosti*. KKK 1910, II department, delo 81-1, National Archives of Finland.

sum amounted to 20 million marks. The Council of Ministers removed from the proposal the words "until personal military service can be restored", because the Finns could have interpreted it as a promise. Twenty million marks was not to be a definite maximum and after ten years the sum would be reconsidered.

Again, as in 1899, the Finnish Diet refused to give any statement because the Council of Ministers was not a constitutionally authorized organ for Finnish affairs.⁶⁴ This protest was comfortably ignored by the Imperial government; the Finns had been asked for a statement as decreed in the law of 1910, and now the question could be discussed in the Duma in November 1911.⁶⁵

Kokovtsov, the Minister of Finance, appointed Prime Minister after Stolypin had been murdered in September 1911, spoke for the government in the Duma. According to his words, the honest Finnish people had been led astray by their leaders, who regarded the proposal as oppression, but in fact the new law was unavoidable, because Finland could not be allowed a separate army nor could Finns be accepted into the Imperial army. And it was fair, because each Russian subject paid about 4.5 roubles for military purposes every year, in addition to personal military service, while every Finn was to pay 1.5–2.5 roubles only and still be exempt from service.⁶⁶

The tone of Kokovtsov's speech was designed to please the Rightists, the Nationalists, and the court, who were dissatisfied with the Finnish situation. They were delighted at the Prime Minister's truly Russian words.⁶⁷

On the Left, the Constitutionalist Democrat or Kadet party remarked that the Duma did not represent all the Russian people; the military conflict had been originated by Kuropatkin, who had led Russia to defeat, and Bobrikov, who had polluted the pages of Russian history.⁶⁸ The Leftists pointed out that it was the government's policy that had made Finns hostile to Russia, and all honest citizens could only oppose the government both in the Empire and in the Grand Duchy.⁶⁹

64 Eduskunnan alamainen adressi 23. IX 1910. KKK 1910, II department, delo 81–1, National Archives of Finland (a Most Loyal Address of the Parliament).

65 Gosudarstvennaia Duma, tretii sozyv, stenograficheskie otechety 1911, tom I, pp. 681–89.

66 Gosudarstvennaia Duma 1911, pp. 690–700.

67 Gosudarstvennaia Duma 1911, p. 701.

68 Gosudarstvennaia Duma 1911, pp. 710–19.

69 Gosudarstvennaia Duma 1911, p. 3.

The parties both on the Right and on the Left thus used the occasion for their own political purposes, the Rightists to declare the national and political unity of the Empire, the Left to criticize the government and the political system.

No Finnish views were expressed. In fact, Kokovtsov's speech was reasonable and the proposal well argued, if the idea of Finland as a border province of Russia, not a separate constitutional state, was accepted. But Finns did not accept this fact of life, and their dissatisfaction only grew because of the new law.

The Governor-General's newspaper, *Finliandskaia Gazeta*, disapproved of the tone of Finnish protests and hoped that in the future Finns would be impregnated with love and respect for the great Empire. Then they could be allowed the honour of serving under the Imperial banners in glorious brotherhood-in-arms with Russians.⁷⁰ Such views were regarded by the Finns as mere hypocrisy; they could not take them in earnest.

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For the Rightist newspaper *Novoe Vremia*, the proposal implied a new advantage for the Finns. A few million marks instead of personal military service was a ridiculous compensation if one remembered that buying exemption for a serf from conscription had cost about 25,000 – 30,000 roubles; for 30,000 men the payment should thus have been 750,000,000 roubles.⁷¹

The Duma accepted the proposal first by 224 votes to 107, and in the decisive reading by 142 votes to 89.⁷² The Imperial Council also accepted the proposal, and after Imperial confirmation, it was promulgated as a law for Finland on 9 February 1912.⁷³ The Senate continued paying the money, the annual amount of which grew to 17 million marks in 1916.

70 *Finliandskaia Gazeta* 17/30. I 1912.

71 *Novoe Vremia* 17/39. XII 1911.

72 Gosudarstvennaia Duma 1911, pp. 749, 3264.

73 Suomen asetuskokoelma 1912, n:o 2, 27. I/9. II 1912.

MILITARY REFORM AFTER THE FAR EASTERN DEBACLE

Problems of the weakened Imperial army

The military-constitutional problems in Finland, important for the Finns, were only a minor factor in the Tsarist regime's general endeavour of making the Imperial army fit for the expected and planned great war in the West.

It took a long time for the army to revive after the defeat in the Far East. In 1905–06, there were military revolts in several garrisons in the Empire, for example the one mentioned above in Sveaborg in the summer of 1906. The majority of troops remained disciplined, though, and contributed to government efforts to restore order. The soldiers, who were apt to revolt against the hesitancy of weak superiors, obeyed orders when they perceived that the authorities were strong and determined.⁷⁴ Hundreds of military expeditions against peasant revolts took place in 1906–07. These operations gravely disturbed the reorganization of the detachments left in disorder by the badly regulated mobilization for the previous war, and also prevented their regular training.

At this time, the Imperial field army nominally consisted of forty-eight infantry divisions and twenty-two army corps, which, reinforced with reserve divisions, were to be united into armies in case of a war on the western frontier. The Niemen and the Narev armies were to face the Germans in Lithuania and Poland, the Bug and the South-West armies the Austrians in Galitsia and the Ukraine, and a Vth Army was planned to join in the fight either against the Germans or the Austrians, as the case might be. A detached army corps guarded the Rumanian border and another corps prepared for landing in the Turkish Straits; later, these corps were transformed into the VIIth and the VIIIth Armies.

The VIth Army, with its staff in St. Petersburg, was to defend the Baltic coasts to secure the Imperial capital. Under it, in the Baltic provinces the 18th Army Corps guarded the approaches from Prussia towards St Petersburg, and in the Imperial capital the Guards Corps

74 Bushnell, "Peasants in Uniform; the Tsarist Army as a Peasant Society", *Journal of Social History* 9/1980.

was stationed, the two corps consisting in all of 203 battalions and 71 squadrons.⁷⁵

The military planners only slowly comprehended what the entente of 1907 implied, and the war plan of 1908 still counted Britain among Russia's supposed enemies. However, the more probable enemies were supposed to be Turkey and Austria in the south and south-west, in the north-west Germany and Sweden, very probably these two together, less probably joined by Norway. They were calculated as being able to send an invasion force of 24,000 Germans, 82,000 Swedes, and 19,000 Norwegians over the Baltic Sea, supported by sixteen coastal battleships, or sixteen first-rate battleships if Germany were not fighting against England simultaneously.⁷⁶

The danger from the north-west

Sweden was expected to invade Finland, supported by a population dissatisfied with Russian rule, and to advance through the country towards St Petersburg. The Germans were expected to join the attack on the northern coast of the Gulf of Finland. This operation was envisaged as diverting as many of the Russian forces as possible away from the main front.⁷⁷ The Swedes were expected to land somewhere on the western coast of Finland, at Hanko, in Turku, at Rauma, Pori, Vaasa, or Pietarsaari, or to march around the Gulf of Bothnia via Tornio. The invading force was presumed to consist of six divisions or 72 battalions, 40 squadrons and 228 guns.⁷⁸

The Russian 22nd Army Corps in Finland was to operate as the right flank of the VIth Army. The corps was given detailed instructions to protect Helsinki during the first days of mobilization, to protect the Sveaborg and Viipuri fortresses from the land side, and to defend Tammisaari, Kotka, Loviisa, and Hamina against small landings, to prevent the enemy from cutting the trunk railway line, and to maintain contact with the army commander and the commandant of Kronstadt. After mobilizing, the army corps was to be divided into two

75 RGVA, fond 400 opis 6, delo 1007, Staff of St. Petersburg military district to Main Staff 8. X 1908.

76 A.M. Zaionchkovskii, *Plany voiny*, pp. 157–68, 189, 196–97, 203, 211, 215, 220, 247, 262; Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii k mirovoi voine na more*, pp. 202, 207.

77 Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii k mirovoi voine na more*, p. 202.

78 RGVA, fond 2262, opis 1, delo 28, Doklad Shtaba Peterburgskago voennago okruga 8. XI 1910.

detachments. One of them was to be positioned in the Helsinki–Riihimäki region, with vanguards at Tammisaari, Kirkkonummi, Sipoo, and Loviisa, while the second detachment was to be positioned in the Kymijoki–Viipuri region, with vanguards at Kotka, Hamina, Säkijärvi, and Koivisto.⁷⁹

Guarding the coasts caused a great deal of headache. There was the problem of the communications necessary for a speedy alarm in case of the expected enemy landing. In the absence of a navy, guards had to be posted on the coast to keep an eye open for smoke, fires, signals, and any movement at sea, to make clear whether it was a battle fleet or a landing fleet that was approaching, to report on the activity of the local population, and to prevent them from contacting the enemy. Any landing attempt had to be signalled to the vanguards, which with all means at their disposal were to delay the enemy from advancing to the east.⁸⁰

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If the enemy should carry out a major landing in the west of Finland, the 22nd Army Corps was to act as vanguard until the main body of the VIth Army could reach the theatre of war from St Petersburg. With small detachments against the enemy front and flanks, by guarding the railway from Helsinki and Hämeenlinna to St. Petersburg, and by strictly guarding the coasts, communication with the army could be maintained.

The commander of the 22nd Army Corps, Lieutenant General Olkhovskii, who succeeded Boeckmann, declared that if the lines of communication should be threatened by Finnish guerilla detachments led by enemy agents, it might prove impossible to mobilize some of the troops in western Finland. The brigade in Helsinki was certainly not able to secure order in the interior at the same time as it was fully occupied with its own mobilization, and the brigade in Viipuri would be able to prevent the movement of rebels only in the coastal region in the immediate vicinity of the town.

The situation might be even more difficult were the enemy to attempt a major landing to the east of Helsinki. The enemy could cut the trunk railway soon after landing, and the Helsinki brigade could then escape from encirclement only by a long and difficult march

79 Shtab voisk gvardii i Peterburgskago Voennago Okrug, Instruksiiia oborony poberezhia 5. III 1908. Ven sot asiak 6071, National Archives of Finland.

80 Instruksiiia voisk dlia okhrany poberezhia Finliandii, 23. VIII 1908. Ven sot asiak 2175, National Archives of Finland.

through the lake region. It would be better for the brigade to remain immobile, to secure Sveaborg from the land side and to guard the stores at Hämeenlinna. The VIth Army should then open the communications starting from St Petersburg and the Karelian Isthmus.⁸¹

Along with these troubles, there existed the problem of military action for internal political reasons in Finland, as shown above. For example, in case of a war against Japan, the 1st Army Corps was to be sent to the Far East, but only if it was not involved in a campaign against Finnish guerrillas. In that case, the 20th Army Corps was to be sent to fight the Japanese, but if Britain should join the enemies, this corps was also to join the corps destined for Finland instead of being sent to the Far East.⁸²

On the basis of police and gendarme information, the 22nd Army Corps regarded their position as rather difficult: "We must face the worst and deplorably enough also the most probable case that Germany and Sweden will declare war on us, and that Finland will rise in rebellion... The situation of the two brigades in the country will be hopeless, positioned as they are far from each other, and because they ought simultaneously to mobilize, to fend off the enemy landing, and quell the rebellion."⁸³

In time, the memory of 1905, when the rebellion took the form of a general strike, grew ever more threatening and the army corps staff deemed the situation ever more dangerous as the plans were thought out and details worked in. The first problem was getting the mobilization order to the garrisons, because "all means of communications will be useless in case of a rebellion"⁸⁴ as "the population, hostile to us, will cut railway, telegraph and telephone lines".⁸⁵

The way out of this impasse was to deposit mobilization orders in the safes of the local commanders. If the communications were cut, they would have the authority to open the envelope, and to act either

81 Soobrazheniia po obespecheniiu soedineniia voisk korpusa s glav. silami.s.d. Ven sot asiak 6071, p. 33. National Archives of Finland.

82 RGVIA, fond 400, opis 6, delo 1006, O sostavlenii mobilizatsionnago rospisaniia 3. IV 1908.

83 Commander of the 22nd army corps Olkhovskii to the St. Petersburg Military District 6. XII 1908. Ven sot asiak 6071, National Archives of Finland.

84 A memorandum by the 22nd army corps staff 1. X 1908, Ven sot asiak 6071, National Archives of Finland

85 22nd army corps staff 1. X 1908. Ven sot asiak 6071, National Archives of Finland.

according to the general mobilization plan n:o 18, against an external enemy, or according to the special plan against internal rebellion. Clear indicators had to be defined to enable the commanders to conclude whether decisive action was necessary.⁸⁶

But the problem remained that the local population could rise either in a spontaneous rebellion or be provoked to rise by an enemy landing, and the local commanders had no possibility of knowing which of the two was taking place, because communications would be cut and they would only see the local rebels. Thus they could not know which envelope to slit open, the different garrisons, isolated from each other, would not act in concert, and carrying out two different mobilization plans would end in confusion. The army corps staff repeated that it was very much to be feared that any mobilization would be impossible, and there was no hope at all for a timely mobilization.⁸⁷

The higher military authorities were reluctant to disperse their forces on the basis of uncertain information or for political reasons.⁸⁸ The Main Staff (*Glavnyi Shtab*) in St. Petersburg promised to send reinforcements to Finland if the popular rising were serious enough, and if the external situation allowed it. If something really did happen, the 22nd Army Corps would be reinforced up to wartime strength, as also the 1st and 18th Corps in St. Petersburg and Estonia, and in addition two rifle brigades from the Warsaw military district, one rifle brigade from Kiev and one grenadier division from Moscow, with Cossack, cavalry, and artillery detachments (ninety-six guns from the 1st Corps, forty-eight from the 18th Corps, twenty-four from Kiev, and twenty-four from Moscow), sapper battalions, a field telegraph company, four railway companies and two railway gendarme squadrons would be mobilized.

There is no clear indication of how the troops eventually to be transferred to Finland were to be replaced in Moscow, Kiev and Warsaw, but in St Petersburg the 50th and 67th Reserve Divisions were to be brought up to their full wartime strength, with twenty-four batteries of artillery. The St Petersburg military district staff was to

86 Staff of the St. Petersburg Military District to the 22nd army corps staff 24. X 1908. Ven sot asiak 6071, National Archives of Finland.

87 22nd Army Corps staff, a memoir (doklad) 24. XI 1908 Ven sot asiak 6071, National Archives of Finland.

88 Kujala, *Venäjän hallituksen suunnitelmat Suomen palauttamisesta järjestykseen vuosina 1907–1914*, p. 295.

be reinforced sufficiently to be able to direct the operations.⁸⁹

This mighty force was to be sent against the Finns if necessary and only if other, continental enemies kept out of the conflict. But a permanent strengthening of the garrison in Finland seemed so urgently necessary that, in spite of reluctance of the War Ministry, in 1908 the order was given to form a third rifle brigade in the border country, while elsewhere in the Empire the army began to be reinforced in 1909. Of course, it took time to carry out the order, and barracks for the third brigade were not under construction till 1910, partly at the cost of the Finnish state. The additional troops were positioned "for strategic and political reasons [...] mainly on the St Petersburg–Helsinki railway line in order to secure eventual mobilization."⁹⁰

The cadres for the third brigade were formed from the 221st Troitsko-Sergiev Reserve regiment for the 9th Rifle Regiment in Finland, from the 1st Artillery Battalion of Kovel for the 10th Regiment, from the 237th Reserve Battalion and 2nd Grodno Fortress Battalion for the 11th Regiment, and from the Vyborg Fortress Infantry Battalion for the 12th Rifle Regiment.⁹¹ The first and second regiments of each brigade in Finland had numbered more men than was normal in peacetime, and the supernumerary men were now ordered to the third brigade, but because the barracks were only being constructed slowly, the order could not be carried out until, at the beginning of 1914, the barracks were completed.⁹²

In the autumn of 1909, in connection with the purge of the Finnish Senate, Stolypin believed that an open conflict could break out and asked for additional troops to be transferred to Finland. The War Ministry and the staff of the Military District opposed this, perceiving no immediate military or political necessity for the increase. Reinforcements were to be sent only in case of real difficulties with the Finns.⁹³

89 RG VIA, fond 400, opis 6, delo 1006, Boevoe rospisanie voisk, prednaznachennykh k mobilizatsiiu v sluchae vooruzhennago vozstaniia v Finliandii, 3. IV 1908.

90 Nicholas Nicholaevich to Roediger 19. XII 1908, KKK 1910, II department, delo 12 A, National Archives of Finland.

91 RG VIA fond 1343, opis 3, delo 12, Perepiska s glavnom shtabom, s okruzhnym dezhurnym generalom, s okruzhnym intendantskom pravleniem i so shtabom armeiskikh korpusakh o reorganizatsii armii 1908-1910; Main Staff to St. Petersburg Military District staff 18. II 1909.

92 RG VIA fond 29 opis 3 delo 1498, O shtatakh polkov 1, 2 i 3 Finliandskikh strelkovykh brigad 22. IV–4. VI 1914.

93 Kujala, forthcoming.

After the military district of Finland had been abolished in 1905, the Governor-General – Obolenskii and after him Gerard – had lost the position of commander in chief of the troops in the country. This contributed to the paralysis of Russian power during the general strike of 1905. In 1908 the new, reliable Governor-General Boeckmann was authorized to call for military help in restoring order, in order to avoid a repetition of the experience of 1905.⁹⁴ This regulation pertained only to peacetime, while in time of war, according to the Russian rules, the Governor-General was to be subordinated to the respective army commander-in-chief, i. e. the VIth Army in St Petersburg. If communications with the Imperial capital should be cut by the enemy or rebels, the commander of the 22nd Army Corps was temporarily to have the authority of an army commander.⁹⁵ Thus he would be the Governor-General's superior and there would be no confusion as to who was to be in charge; and Finnish politicking authorities would have no chance of abusing military help in their internal quarrels.

Confidence restored

In 1909 the Minister of War, Roediger, confessed that his army was incapable of securing Russia's interests in the Balkan crisis; he had been unable to organize and train the army after the defeat and revolution of 1905–06. He was replaced by General Vladimir Aleksandrovich Sukhomlinov and a major reorganization of the armed forces took place. It was made easier by the revival of the Russian economy in 1909–13 after the disturbances of 1901–06 (famine, war, revolution). The Committee of Imperial Defence was abolished and all military authority was again concentrated in the War Ministry. Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholasovich remained commander of the Guards troops and the St Petersburg Military District, and he was supposed and destined to be the supreme commander-in-chief in a future war, although no definite order existed to this end.

Sukhomlinov undertook a reorganization and modernization of the army. There had existed several different kinds of infantry – guards,

94 Prikaz po voiskam Gvardii i Peterburgskago Voennago Okruga 3. II 1908; St. Petersburg military district to Seyn 3. XII 1909. KKK 1908, II department, delo 30, National Archives of Finland.

95 St. Petersburg Military District Chief of Staff von Brincken to the Commander of the 22nd army corps Olkhovskii 5. X 1909. KKK 1909, I department, delo L, National Archives of Finland.

grenadiers, rifles, army infantry, local and fortress troops, with different numbers for full wartime, enhanced peacetime and normal peacetime strength, or cadres only for the reserve divisions. Sukhomlinov organized all infantry into normal mobile infantry divisions, the number of which was increased from 48 to 70. By his reforms, Sukhomlinov succeeded in cutting military expenditure and at the same time in obtaining additional appropriations from the Duma and the Ministry of Finance, viz. 81 million roubles for artillery, 114 millions for improved roads, railways, and communications, about 250 millions for different smaller items, and 373 millions for new fortifications, in all 715 million roubles. Nevertheless, in firepower the Russian army remained weaker than its opponents; while a German army corps had 144 field guns and an Austrian corps 128, a Russian army corps had 96 or 112 guns. In heavy guns the ration remained even worse, especially as most of the heavy pieces were installed in fortresses.

After the Far Eastern defeat and the revolution at home, the bulk of the army had been drawn back from the western forward border positions to the Niemen – Bug – Dniester line, with only fortress troops in Miliutin's fortresses in Poland. Sukhomlinov did not approve of the forward position, which could easily be encircled by the Germans and Austrians. He preferred transforming the temporary withdrawal into a permanent defence-line, where the peacetime army could wait until the reserves were mobilized and concentrated, protected by fortresses at Kovno (Kaunas) – Grodno – Brest(-Litovsk). However, he was not able to maintain this "Plan no. 19", because it implied surrendering Russia's richest provinces to the enemy, and giving up the principal idea of the Dual Alliance, the simultaneous attack by the Russians and the French in order to prevent the Germans from dealing with their enemies one by one. But for a while the plan existed. In the north, it implied drawing the main defence-line at the Narva – Suursaari – Kymijoki level.

As to the navy, only a few old ships and light craft had survived the war with Japan, together with a few modern ships from the pre-war programmes completed by and after the end of the war.⁹⁶ By 1906

96 Battleships: *Petr Velikii* from 1872, *Imperator Alexander II* 1887, *Tsesarevich* 1901, *Slava* 1903 (completed 1905), *Andrei Pervozvannyi* 1906, *Imperator Pavel I* 1907; armoured cruisers: *Pamiat Azova* 1888, *Rossiia* 1896, *Gromoboi* 1896, *Admiral Makarov* 1906, *Baian* 1907, *Pallada* 1906, *Rurik* 1906; cruisers *Avrora*

the British *Dreadnought* had made all earlier battleships obsolete. For a few years no serious naval force existed in Russia for defending the provinces close to the Imperial capital and thus all the burden of defence fell on the land army.

In the depression of 1905-06, the navy doubted their ability to deny any enemy access to the Gulf of Finland; Kronstadt was the frontal position for St Petersburg's seaward defence. The Admirals also doubted the ability of the army to defend the Helsinki-Hämeenlinna position; they believed that the army would retire from western Finland behind the Kymijoki River. In 1908, a little bolder already, the navy advanced their defence position to the Kymijoki-Suursaari-Narva level, where the defence was based on minefields and light patrol crafts. Of course, this suited well Sukhomlinov's planning for the next few years. Independently of the plans to withdrawal to the Kymijoki line, Sveaborg was maintained as a naval fortress. It was garrisoned by five fortress battalions and two battalions of fortress artillery. After the revolt of 1906, martial law was still in force there in 1908.⁹⁷

But all the time, these positions close to the eastern end of the Gulf of Finland were regarded as temporary only. Immediately after losing their fleet in the Far East, the Admirals, in 1906-07, had sketched a construction programme for a mighty ocean-going fleet of two eight-ship battle squadrons for the Far East, two for the Baltic Sea, and one for the Black Sea, each squadron consisting of eight dreadnoughts of 21,000 tons, and in addition cruisers, destroyers and submarines were needed to support the battleship squadrons.⁹⁸

The generals wanted naval support for the defence of the Gulf of Finland, for a landing at the Bosphorus, and in the Far East for the guarding of the coast, but the navy was not satisfied with such a humble role. Russia's historic mission in the Near East and Far East, once dominion over the Baltic Sea were secured, could only be fulfilled if a sufficient naval force were built. The army commanders were aghast at these plans for spending thousands of millions roubles, because they had to beg for mere hundreds of millions. Nicholas II,

1900, *Diana* 1899, *Bogatyr* 1901, *Oleg* 1903; 49 big and 29 small torpedo boats, 13 submarines and six minelayers. *Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships 1906 - 1921*, pp. 294-97. RGAVMF, fond 418, opis' 2, delo 199, plan voyny Rossii i konspekt plana voyny na Baltiiskom more 1907 g.

97 Fortress commandant to Governor-General 2. IX 1908. KKK 1906, I department, delo XXVI, National Archives of Finland.

98 Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii...* pp. 103-19.

in his admiral's uniform, said "let us naval officers decide naval questions".⁹⁹

Of course, no money for such a giant fleet existed. But the navy was reorganized. In 1905, a Navy Ministry was established instead of the Grand Ducal office of a General-Admiral, and, in 1906, a Naval General Staff was organized. In 1908 the Admirals asked for a reduced fleet of only four dreadnoughts, fourteen destroyers, and three submarines, but the Duma refused, distrusting the notoriously corrupt naval authorities.

In the absence of the future fleet, the waterway to the Imperial capital had to be defended by other means. In 1909 the reconstruction of St Petersburg's seaward defences started. To protect the flanks of Kronstadt, coastal forts were constructed at Ino in the Finnish area on the northern coast of the bay of Kronstadt, and at Krasnaia Gorka on the opposite side. Viipuri was maintained in the status of a fortress with a garrison of five fortress battalions and one-and-a-half fortress artillery battalions.

In the estimates of the St Petersburg staffs, the situation in the Baltic Sea depended on whether the Germans would strike first to the east or to the west. If the French were to be the first victim, only a minor landing was to be expected on the Baltic coasts, perhaps somewhere in the region of Libau or Riga, from where the Germans could advance towards the rear of the Russian armies on the main front. But if they should attack Russia first, a major landing could be expected, because German forces would then be overwhelming and they could easily detach four divisions for the landing operation, which would probably be strengthened by six Swedish divisions. The enemy had more than sufficient means of transport for this force.¹⁰⁰

In a military-geographical review of possible theatres of war, the area of the St Petersburg military district was divided into three defence zones. The first in importance was the capital itself, but no enemy landing was expected directly on St Petersburg, because Kronstadt closed the passages leading there. Between Narva and Viipuri, the only possible beach for a serious landing was at Koivisto, which also had a good anchorage. Viipuri was well fortified and it was felt that the enemy probably would want to destroy it before his landing force could

⁹⁹ Shatsillo, *Razvitie flota...* pp. 50–51.

¹⁰⁰ A.M. Zaionchkovskii, *Plany voyny*, pp. 189, 196–97, 215.

feel safe. On the road from Koivisto to St Petersburg, there were no natural defence-lines, but the small rivers at Vammelsuu and Siestarjoki (Sestroretsk) might be of some tactical use.

To defend the Imperial capital there was first a strong Guards corps, which consisted of the first and second Guards Infantry Divisions, the Guards rifle brigade, the first and second Guards Cavalry Divisions, and the Guards artillery brigades, two on foot and one mounted. Then there was the 1st Army Corps, which consisted of the 22nd division with its *Vyborgskii*, *Vil'manstrandskii*, *Neishlottskii* and *Petrovskii* regiment garrisoned in the region of Novgorod, and of the 37th Division with its Tsaritsyn, Samara, and Kazan regiments in Ingermanland.

The Baltic provinces formed another main region of the military district. Reval and Baltischport were probable objectives for enemy action, but the Livonian coast was too distant from anything vital for a useful landing, nor were there any towns important enough to be occupied. The Estonian islands Dagö (Hiidenmaa) and Ösel (Saaremaa) were deemed impossible to defend in the absence of a navy.

The Estonian and Livonian coasts were to be guarded against enemy raids by detachments of a few battalions each, and a certain force was to be kept in reserve in case of a major attack. The defence of the provinces was the task of the 18th Army Corps, with its 23rd Division at Reval and Narva and the 24th Division at Pskov, with their northern-named *Belomorskii*, *Onezhkii*, *Dvinskii*, *Pechorskii*, and *Irkutskii*, *Eniseiskii*, *Krasnoiarskii*, *Omskii* regiments, to us now well-known from their period of garrisoning Finland.

Several reserve regiments, the 197th-200th, 213th-216th, and 219th, were to be mobilized in northern and central Russia to be then sent to reinforce the VIth Army in the defence of the capital.¹⁰¹

Naval manoeuvres proved that the existing couple of armoured ships were not of much use, and the Suursaari position was too wide from coast to coast for effective defence. A better position was the narrowest point of the Gulf between Porkkala on the Finnish coast and Naissaari (Nargen) on the Estonian coast. The Åland archipelago and the Moon Sound would be ideally suited to be bases of light torpedo and mine forces to attack the flanks of an enemy trying to

101 RG VIA, fond 1343, opis' 3, delo 13, o novykh formirovaniakh, pereformirovaniakh i rasformirovaniakh, v svyazi s rasporyazheniem mobilizatsionnago otdeleniia, po mobilizatsionnomu rospisaniia 1909 i 1910 godu.

force access to the Gulf of Finland. Access to the Gulf of Bothnia could be guarded from the Åland Islands.¹⁰²

Finland in the defence plans for the Baltic coasts

In the plans for the defence of St Petersburg, Finland, like the Baltic provinces, was a region second in importance only to the capital itself. The enemy was expected to invade Finland, cut the country off from Russia, and advance from there towards its main goal. There was a dense road network close to the coasts, but also a few transverse roads from the Gulf Bothnia towards the south-east (which the Russians had used in 1808). The defender could avail himself of the river lines of Tornio, Kemi, Oulu, Kyrö, and Kymijoki, and, in the interior, of the lake system of Saimaa. The country was sparsely inhabited, towns were small, the lake district was difficult to traverse and from there the enemy flanks could be threatened (as the Finnish guerillas had shown in 1808 and again in the manoeuvres in the 1890s). The dense telephone network could be useful, but the defence would be complicated by the hostile population and made impossible by a popular rising, the Russians thought.¹⁰³

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If the forces of the military district should not be needed on the main front, the Guards could concentrate against the landing forty battalions, twenty-four squadrons, forty machine guns and ninety-six guns, the 18th Corps its 23rd and 24th Divisions of thirty-two battalions, thirty-six machine guns and ninety-six guns, and of course the 22nd Army Corps in Finland. If only Finland were invaded, the 18th Army Corps troops would be transshipped from Reval to Helsinki at night, protected by darkness, and the Guards units would arrive by train. The 18th Corps would be ready to march on the 14th day, and the Guards on the 17th day after the declaration of mobilization.

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- 102 RGA VMF, fond 418, opis' 1, delo 127, materialy k voenno-statisticheskomu opisaniiu Baltiiskogo moria, 29. V 1906-17. XI 1909; delo 131, strategicheskoe opisanie chasti Olandskikh sher Lumpafierda i tablitsa rasstoianii mezhdur portami i lotsmanskami stantsiiami v Finskom i Botnicheskom zalivakh, 27. XI-I. XII 1906 g.; delo 141, svedeniia o Revelskom Imperatora Petra Velikago porte 11. VIII 1906 - 30. X 1913 gg.; delo 201, zakliucheniia posrednikov o rezultatov boevykh manevrov Baltiiskogo flota 1908 g.; delo 338, zapiska kap. 2 r. V.N. Altfatera o zadachakh Baltiiskogo flota na sluchai evropeiskoi voiny 17. IV 1914.
- 103 RGVIA, fond 1343, opis' 3, delo 91, obozrenii Peterbugskago voennago okruga, kratkii voenno-geograficheskii ocherk mestnosti veroiatnykh voennykh deistvii, S.Peterburg 1911.

Swedish mobilization was supposed to take two weeks. In case of a Swedish attack, the defending troops would be formed into a Northern Army, whose task would be to defeat the enemy in the north of Finland. It would be advantageous if the navy could secure the Åland Islands before the Swedes occupied them. With a strong and quick riposte, the Swedes would be defeated and compelled to leave the Triple Alliance, after which the Russians would be able to leave only a force of limited numbers to occupy Finland.¹⁰⁴

In 1910, the 22nd Army Corps in Finland received revised instructions. It was assumed that the enemy would easily be able to advance from Helsinki to Viipuri and on to St Petersburg, because the enemy navy, dominant on the Baltic Sea, would secure the right flank, and the rebellious Finns the left flank in the interior.

A minor German landing or a purely Swedish landing might take place somewhere in the west, in Turku, at Hanko, Lappohja (Lappvik), Tammisaari or Porkkala, in order to avoid being isolated between the 22nd Army Corps and the main forces of the VIth Army.

A major German landing would probably take place at Koivisto, the closest convenient landing beach to the Imperial capital. It would consist of four to eight German divisions and six Swedish divisions, in all 178,000 bayonets, 10,000 sabres, and 828 guns. The enemy would arrive at Koivisto two or three weeks after the declaration of war.¹⁰⁵ On the 23rd day, about fifty battalions would be advancing towards St Petersburg and a further seventy-three battalions would be disembarking at Koivisto.¹⁰⁶

The mobilization of the Russian troops in Finland was calculated to take place in nine to eleven days – it had not been essentially speeded up from the beginning of the century – and the concentration of the main fighting forces in twenty days, with the last Cossack troops from the Don arriving on the 30th day and supply detachments on the 40th day. The transport of the troops and detachments destined for Finland would be slowed down by the march through St Petersburg; the bridge over the Neva was still unfinished, completed

104 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis I, delo 28, Doklad shtaba S.Peterburgskago Voennago Okruga 8. XI 1910, signed by v. Brincken, chief of staff.

105 St. Petersburg Military District staff to the 22nd army corps staff 7. IX 1910; deistviia voisk korpusa v Finliandii v sluchae vneshnykh oslozhenii. Ven sot asiak 11309, National Archives of Finland.

106 A.M. Zaionchkovski, *Plany voiny*, pp. 189, 196–97, 215.

only in 1913.

The 22nd Army Corps now consisted of the three rifle brigades or twenty-four battalions, with four Dragoon squadrons and two Cossack *sotnii*, one battalion of sappers, and an artillery brigade of seventy-two cannons and twelve mortars. The fortress of Sveaborg and Viipuri were, as always, garrisoned by five infantry battalions each, and by four and three artillery batteries respectively.

A new infantry division, the 50th, made up from the previous reserve troops, of the 197th, 198th, 199th and 200th Regiments and the 50th Artillery Brigade, was stationed partly in Vologda, partly on the Karelian Isthmus under the 22nd Corps, sometimes partly at Kronstadt, under the command of the St Petersburg military district staff.¹⁰⁷

The plan for the concentration of the corps followed the previous plans in its main lines, with details varied from year to year. The western group was to be stationed in Helsinki (3 1/2 battalions), at Riihimäki (4 battalions), and Hämeenlinna (2 battalions), with vanguards in Turku (2 battalions) and at Tammissaari (2 battalions), with small cavalry guards at Kirkkonummi, Sipoo and Loviisa. The eastern group was ordered to station its main forces in Viipuri (4 battalions), at Mikkeli (2 battalions) and Kouvola (2 battalions), with a vanguard at Hamina (1 1/2 battalions), and a guard post at Kotka. Detachments of the 50th Division were stationed under the respective commandants at Sveaborg (3 battalions), in Viipuri (5 battalions), at Koivisto (4 battalions), and a detachment at Säkkijärvi.¹⁰⁸

The commander of the 2nd Rifle Regiment was ordered to consider stationing one of his battalions at Kuopio and another at Vaasa (Nikolaistad), but he answered that this force was too weak to close the transverse road from Tornio via Sortavala to St Petersburg or to fend off a Swedish landing on the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia. On the contrary, the isolated battalions would provoke the local rebels to act against them, and the other troops of the army corps would be

107 RGVA fond 1343, opis 3, delo 100, Razvertyvanie po rospisaniu 1910 goda (for the Vth Army); delo 12, Perepiska s glavnom shtabom, s okruzhnym dezhurnym generalom, s okruzhnym intendantskim pravleniem i so shtabom armeiskikh korpusakh o reorganizatsii armii 1908–1910; Main Staff to the St Petersburg Military District staff 18. II 1909.

108 St. Petersburg Military District staff to 22nd Army Corps staff 7. IX 1910; deistviia voisk korpusa v Finliandii v sluchae vneshnykh oslozhnenii. Ven sot asiak 11309, National Archives of Finland.

unable to aid these distant detachments.¹⁰⁹

If a major enemy landing were to take place at Koivisto, the eastern group was instructed to act under the orders of the Viipuri fortress commandant in repelling the invasion. The western group would fend off small landings or raids on the coast between Turku and Porkkala, secure Helsinki, and guard Turku, Tammisaari, Loviisa and Kotka with small detachments. Further, the corps was to defend the landward side of Sveaborg, closely guard the coast, maintain contact with the Baltic fleet, with the army staff, and with the Viipuri, Sveaborg and Kronstadt fortresses. In view of the disloyalty of the Finnish population and its tendency to favour the Swedes, the western group also had to maintain absolute order and peace in the country, not shying away even from the most extreme measures.¹¹⁰

The instructions given by the military district staff were detailed, an attempt to comprehend all eventualities. General Olkhovskii was angered by the tasks given him, because, in fact, he had been ordered to be prepared for all possibilities and to carry out all thinkable actions simultaneously. In his opinion, keeping order and controlling the population was only possible in places which were actually occupied by his troops. Preparing to defend Turku, Kotka or other coastal localities implied a dispersal of his troops, contrary to the dictates of the situation. Protecting the landward side of Sveaborg meant defending Helsinki and transforming the army corps into an immobile garrison. Guarding every point on the coast had been proved impossible during the manoeuvres, and, with the telephone system operated by Finns, communications would be so unreliable that the vanguards could not be alerted speedily enough. No support could be expected from the Baltic fleet for the left flank of the corps, and its unprotected right flank of 400 versts between Riihimäki and St Petersburg would be threatened by Finnish guerillas.

Olkhovskii complained "what can be expected of me under such conditions?" He proposed that his task should be reduced, that the Baltic fleet should be ordered to cover his left flank, that he should be free from the liability of keeping order, and that he should be

109 2nd Finland Brigade to the 22nd Army Corps 23. II 1911. Ven sot asiak 11309, p. 53 e. seq., National Archives of Finland.

110 St Petersburg Military District staff to the 22nd Army Corps staff 7. IX 1910; deistviia voisk korpusa v Finlandii v sluchae vneshnykh oslozhenii. Ven sot asiak 11309, National Archives of Finland.

given means for protecting the rear and flanks, i. e. more troops, a fourth brigade. The idea of dividing the army corps into two detachments distant from each other was in Olkhovskii's opinion against the military principles and had to be discarded; he proposed concentrating all of his corps in the region of Korja – Kaipainen – Anjala, i.e. along the Kymijoki line.¹¹¹

This idea of dividing the army corps into two parts may have been inherited from the war plan against the *Voima*, which, according to gendarme information, was going to attack two objectives, Helsinki and Viipuri; or it may have reflected the timid cautious prudence of the military district staff, reluctant to give up any objective. On the other hand, the concentration along the Kymijoki concurred with Sukhomlinov's plan to give up the indefensible western regions and to prepare for a defence in protected positions more to the east, and also fit in well with the naval plan of defending the Kotka – Suursaari – Narva position.

Cutting Finland down to size

The military planners preparing the defence of St Petersburg, had reason to regret the restoration of the Viipuri *guberniia* to Finland by Alexander I in 1812.

There was the problem of Imperial regulations for fortress districts, which the constitutionalist Senate had opposed, as related above. Finnish obstruction impeded preparations for the defence even of Kronstadt when the construction of a flanking fort at Ino on the Finnish coast was started in 1909. The military district staff complained that, under Finnish law, Finns could not be prevented from living and causing disturbances in the Ino fortress district.¹¹² Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevich declared that the meddling of Finnish authorities in the affairs of the fortress district was intolerable. The conclusion was that the Ino region should be annexed to the St Petersburg *guberniia*.¹¹³ The police wanted the annexation, too, to

111 Zapiska po voprosam, sviazannym s sostavleniem operativnago plana 22 armeiskago korpusa na sluchai voyny s derzhavami troistvennago soiuza. Ven sot asiak 11309, p. 135 e. seq., National Archives of Finland.

112 Staff of the St.Petersburg Military District to Boeckmann 31. I 1909. KKK II department, delo 34; Seyn to Governor of Viipuri 31. VIII 1910. KKK Dd 8; O forte Ino, ogranicheniia v prave zastroiki mestnosti prilegaiushchaia k forte. KKK 1910, I department, delo LXXXI-II, National Archives of Finland.

make it easier to flush out the revolutionaries from their hiding places, which had been a problem since 1905, as seen above.

The Council of Ministers, advised by Stolypin's Bobrikovian experts,¹¹⁴ decided, in 1911, to set up a committee to clear up the practical and legal problems of transferring the fortress region, i.e. the two border parishes Kivennapa and Uusikirkko, from the Viipuri *guberniia* to the St. Petersburg *guberniia*.

This decision provoked stormy protests in the Finnish press and Diet, but the Council of Ministers decided that these had no formal importance.¹¹⁵

The government decision was favourably commented by the Russian nationalist press. The *Novoe Vremia* was indignant at the cynical refusal of the Finns to acknowledge Russia's sovereign rights in its Finnish *gubernii*, and at their idea that Finland was a separate state.¹¹⁶ For the Finns, the measure seemed one further step in the programme of the Russification of their country.

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The forward defence-line of St. Petersburg had been set to the River Kymijoki, as noted above, so that soon planning the annexation of the two parishes only proved insufficient. The fortress esplanade of Viipuri had to be enlarged, and a flotilla on Lake Saimaa was planned; these measures necessitated the annexation of a larger area. To secure the defence of the Imperial capital from the north, the military authorities demanded that the whole of the Viipuri *guberniia* be transferred from the Finnish administration to the St. Petersburg *guberniia*.¹¹⁷

Seyn favoured the annexation with the argument that the Orthodox Karelian population and monasteries would be better protected from

113 O forte Ino, o tainom prodazhe spirnykh napitkov v mestnosti prilegaiushchikh forte i o merakh borbe s etim zlom; Commandant of Kronstadt to commander of the Military District 30. IV 1910, Stolypin to Sukhomlinov 5. VII 1910, Nicholas Nicholaevich to Sukhomlinov 5. VIII 1910, Sukhomlinov to Seyn 9. VIII 1910, Seyn to Governor of Viipuri 11/24. XI and 11./24. XII 1910, KKK 1910, I department, delo LXXXI – I and IV. National Archives of Finland.

114 Osoboe soveshchanie po delam Velikago Kniazhestva Finliandskago 13. XI 1910. KKK He 6, National Archives of Finland.

115 Petitsiia Seima po povodu zakliucheniia v Vyborgskomu tiurma deputata Airola. KKK 1912, II department, delo 14–12. National Archives of Finland.

116 *Novoe Vremia* 17/30. VIII 1911. (Newspaper cutting in: KKK 1911, I department, delo 18–1, National Archives of Finland).

117 Nicholas Nicholaevich to Sukhomlinov 28. III 1913; memorandum "o neobkhodimosti otdeleniia Vyborgskoi gubernii", KKK 1913, I department, delo 1–7, National Archives of Finland.

Lutheran oppression and Finnish hooligans. The government's Bobrikovian advisers added that Finnish schemes in Russian Karelia and Ingria would thereby be blocked, and the battle against spies and revolutionaries made more effective.¹¹⁸

The Council of Ministers agreed. In their opinion, there were many and intolerable difficulties in carrying out the necessary military measures in Finland, because the population was hostile, the police did not support the legal authorities, the judges politicked against governmental interests, and Russia had no authorities in Finland to safeguard military secrets and interests, while the railways, telephone and telegraph were operated by disloyal Finns who did not understand Russian, and the country was full of hatred and rebelliousness.

The committee for annexation was given the new task of preparing legislation for extending the Imperial administration, judiciary, voting rights, military service and other duties and rights over the Viipuri *guberniia*.¹¹⁹

This decision was reached in the autumn of 1914 when the war had already started and had no immediate importance, because no measures apt to provoke disorder were taken during the war, but the arguments for the annexation demonstrate the difficulties which Finland's special position caused Russian military security after, and partly due to, the reform work of Bobrikov and Seyn.

A quick solution for the Ino fortress problem was brought about when, in 1912, renewed revolutionary activity in the Kronstadt garrison was discovered. A state of war was declared for the fortress, Ino naturally included in the order. At least, the selling of vodka could then be controlled.¹²⁰

118 Zhurnal osobago soveshchaniia po delam V. K. Finliandskago 21. IV 1914, II department, delo 104, National Archives of Finland.

119 Osobyi zhurnal Soveta Ministrov 29. VIII 1914, signed by Nicholas II 16. IX 1914. KKK 1914, II department, delo 104, National Archives of Finland.

120 Prikaz po Kronstadtskomu kreposti 5. VIII 1912, 9. VIII 1912, 1. IX 1912, 10. XI 1912. KKK 1912, I department, delo 1-11, National Archives of Finland. – The first order, after proclaiming a state of war, forbade smoking on the stairs of the fortress; sometimes it is difficult for the historian to take these military worries seriously.

Martial law discussed again

Dissatisfaction in Finland grew because of the unificatory measures taken by the Imperial government after 1908; dissatisfaction increased in 1910 because of the all-Imperial legislation in the Duma and the military millions, but, as explained earlier, Seyn had been cautious enough to avoid provoking the Finns to mass protests. But now the intended annexation of the Karelian Isthmus caused an agitation comparable to that of 1899-1901.

In March 1911 the gendarme chief Colonel Utgof reported that Finland was preparing to repeat the events of 1905, and was only waiting for some external support.¹²¹ The *Voima* was to start operations in winter, when the guerilla detachments could move on skis and isolate the Russian garrisons. Leaders for the *Voima* would be recruited from sports, skiing, shooting and gymnastics societies as well as from voluntary fire brigades. Specialists for the artillery and sappers could be recruited among Russian reservists infected by the revolutionary spirit, especially Jews and Poles.¹²² The whole history of the Finnish *Voima*, real and imaginary – the training of 200,000 reservists by the separate Finnish army, activism in 1904-05, Red Guards and the Sveaborg revolt of 1906, the smuggling of arms, contacts with the Russian Socialist Revolutionaries, the secret equipping of 70,000 or 200,000 men with rifles, machine guns and artillery, war plans to conquer Helsinki and attack St Petersburg – was reviewed and revived.¹²³

Of course, the Finns were not the only minority to cause difficulties in the Empire. French allies deplored the fact that the other Fenno-Ugric peoples, the Caucasian and Central Asian tribes, the Moldavians, the Tatars, the Baltic Germans, the Pan-Islamists, the Armenians, and, perhaps worst of all, the Poles hated and despised Russians but respected Germans and loved Austrians.¹²⁴

121 Report of the gendarme chief 24. III 1911, KKK Hd 103, n:o 1, National Archives of Finland.

122 Svodka svedeniia po Finliandii 16. XII 1910. KKK 1911, I department, delo 17-1, National Archives of Finland.

123 Sovershenno sekretnaia zapiska o vooruzhenii Finliandii 1911-1912. KKK Hd 103, n:o 14, National Archives of Finland.

124 Conference sur l'armée Russe; EMATSH 7 N 1506; Rapport du capitaine Marchal, stagiaire dans l'armée Russe en 1912. EMATSH 7 N 1486 II; Beaucaire from Copenhagen to Poincaré 12. VI 1912. EMATSH 7 N 1544.

But the Finns caused disproportionate problems for Imperial defence. A Finnish rebellion was perhaps not really dangerous if isolated, but in connection with the expected Swedish attack on Finland in support of Germany it was dangerous enough to make even Russia's French allies seriously worried and Russia's generals really angry. "Finnish affairs cause much worry... The country is agitated because of the two parishes, and, in case of a war, two army corps will be needed to keep the Grand Duchy subjected. A general of the Guards said to the French Colonel Janin that Finnish blood was to be let first, and only then Austrian blood".¹²⁵

Seyn had already purged the higher administration of Finland, but the lower administration and judiciary remained unreformed. In the autumn of 1911 the Governor-General proposed declaring martial law in the country, or at least threatening that martial law would be declared for the smallest act of terrorism or indiscipline. General von Brincken, the chief of staff of the St Petersburg Military District, supported the proposal; he did not believe that the *Voima* only existed in the imagination of the gendarmes, though the General Staff and War Ministry may have been less credulous.¹²⁶

Accordingly, plans for military intervention were further detailed. Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevich was designated the Most August Commander-in-Chief for the duration of martial law in Finland. Troops in the west of the country were to operate under the 22th Army Corps staff, while the reinforcements in the Karelian Isthmus were to be led by the 13th Corps staff, transferred from the Smolensk-Orel region to Viipuri. Reinforcements were to arrive from Reval to Helsinki and from St Petersburg to the Isthmus. Helsinki was to be occupied by four Guards rifle battalions and four battalions from the 1st Infantry Division, Viipuri by eight battalions from the 36th Infantry Division. The close defence of St. Petersburg from the Isthmus side was to be the task of the 1st Guards Cavalry Division and the 37th Infantry Division.

Had only the *guberniia* of Viipuri been put under martial law, the 37th Infantry Division with its artillery brigade, the 4th Regiment of the 1st Guards Cavalry Division, one Guards Ural Cossacks sotnia,

125 Colonel Janin, at the Nicholas Academy of the General Staff, to General Vignal 15/28. IX 1911. EMATSH 7 N 1485.

126 Kujala, *Venäjän hallituksen suunnitelmat Suomen palauttamisesta järjestykseen vuosina 1907-1914*, pp. 294-95.

one battery of horse artillery, one Guards sapper battalion and one railway company would have occupied the Isthmus. In a serious case, the 41st Infantry Division and 41st Artillery Brigade, led by the 16th Corps staff, would have been transferred there.¹²⁷

The navy detailed guards for the coast and designated the transports *Anadyr*, *Riga* and *Lakhta* for shuttling troops from Reval to Helsinki in fourteen trips starting from the 11th to the 25th day from mobilization.¹²⁸

Now, the plan was that the reinforcements would march to Finland in their peacetime complement, because their reservists were mainly 'comrades', industrial workers of the capital, who could not be trusted to put down a rebellion.

Martial law was to be declared in Finland at the first sign of disturbance, and the 22nd Army Corps had to take decisive measures from the very beginning against any disorder, without waiting for specific orders. The experience of 1905 proved that inactivity was fatal, not overstepping one's authority.¹²⁹

A declaration or manifesto to explain the situation to the population was prepared. The troops were said to be in the country to bring back into the fold those inhabitants who had criminally risen in revolt, and loyal inhabitants were warned against showing solidarity with the rebels.

In the declaration printed in 1911 the loyal inhabitants were assured of their "religion, citizens' rights, life, honour, and property in all their integrity", but in the second version of 1912, only "religion, honour and property" were to be respected.¹³⁰ Nothing was to be promised that might bind the government; it was well remembered that Finns had used the manifesto of November 1905 as a pretext when they had sought to oust Russian influence from the country under Mechelin's leadership.¹³¹ Planning for war against the Finns continued

127 RGVA, fond 1343, opis' II, delo 376a, Shtab Voisk Gvardii i Peterbugskago Voennago okruga 2. IV 1910.

128 RGAVMF, fond 418, opis' 2, delo 213 o sosredotochenii B. flota na sluchai mobilizatsii po planu N. 1 (vooruzhennoe vosstanie v Finliandii), Raschet perevozki voisk morem po chastnoi mobilizatsionnoi plan n:o 1., p. 330.

129 Zhurnal soveshchaniia po voprosam, sviazannymi s obiaavlениem Finliandii na voennom polozenii 11. & 12. XI 1911. Ven sot asiak 11310, National Archives of Finland.

130 "Julistus Suomen asukkaille" (declaration to the inhabitants of Finland, two different issues from 1911 and 1912), KKK 1911, I department, delo 58_5a, National Archives of Finland.

131 "Luetello sellaisista rikosjutuista, jotka sotatilalle asetettuja seutuja koskevan

during the following years, but few changes were planned in the scheme, except that instead of a Commander-in-Chief, in 1914 the troops in Finland would have been under the commander of the 22nd Army Corps.¹³²

The first phase in carrying out the occupation of Finland was to be the securing of the railways. As early as the summer of 1906, when the revolt in Sveaborg seemed to be auguring a new rebellion, Stolypin had ordered a declaration printed ready to be posted up when necessary. In it, all meetings in a railway area were forbidden, as were railwaymen leaving work, sending telegrams without authorization, or spreading rumours. The section of the Finnish railways from St Petersburg to Viipuri was to be immediately taken over by the military.¹³³

Normally, the Finnish railways were under the observation of seventy-four railway gendarmes; for the period of martial law, 289 gendarmes were to be sent to guard 2,421 kilometres of railway lines.¹³⁴

The Finnish railways would have been run by the chief of military communications of the St Petersburg Military District, aided by section chiefs with the wartime powers of fortress commandants. They were authorized to punish railwaymen for neglecting technical and other regulations, for lack of caution, or unauthorized moving of rolling stock, while courts martial were to deal with manslaughter, robbery, violence, sabotage, distribution of illegal literature, disobeying officials and disturbing soldiers or gendarmes. A declaration for this purpose was also printed and kept ready to be posted up with the other declarations.¹³⁵

asetuksen 17 ja 19 pykälän nojalla ovat vedettävät pois paikallisten tuomioistuinten toimivallasta ja lykättävät sotatuomioistuinten ratkaistavaksi sotalakien mukaan". (Catalogue of matters to be submitted to military courts of justice). KKK 1911, I department, delo 58-5a, National Archives of Finland.

132 O razrabotke novago plana ob"iavleniia Finliandii na voennom polozenii. Proekt 3. VI 1914. KKK 1914, I department, delo 1-16, National Archives of Finland.

133 Zhurnal predvaritel'nago soveshchaniia chlenov osobago komissii pri pravleniia I uchastka S.Peterburg-Beloostrov Finliandskikh kazennykh zheleznnykh dorog. KKK 1907, I department, delo XV; Spravka o meropriiatiakh na sluchai ob"iavleniia Finliandii na voennom polozenii, 17. I 1910. KKK 1910, I department, delo 1-4, National Archives of Finland.

134 Ob"iavlenie mobilizatsii i voennago polozeniiia, deiatelnost' chinov zhandarmskago policheiskago upravlenii Finliand. zhel. dor. v mirnago vrema, a ravno pri ob"iavlenii mobilizatsii ili voennago polozeniiia. KKK 1914, I department, delo 1 13, National Archives of Finland.

135 Osobyi Zhurnal Soveta Ministrov 19. X 1910 & 3. II 1911. KKK 1911, I

It was soon found that papering walls was not enough. In addition to the army railway battalions, Russian railwaymen were also needed to replace striking Finns. The Ministry of Communications listed volunteers and in 1913 it reported that 5,770 railwaymen were ready to leave in three or four days.¹³⁶

A similar manning of the Finnish telegraph was also found necessary; the department of posts and telegraph selected personnel to secure communications in Finland.¹³⁷

The telephone network remained a problem, because it was owned by small local telephone companies. Seyn wished to put them under the administration of the Imperial Treasury, because the telephone network was vital for receiving the alarm that something serious was going to take place, and it would be too difficult and too late to replace the Finnish personnel only in conjunction with the declaration of martial law.¹³⁸ But there was no solution to this problem, because private property could not be sequestered in peacetime, and there were no Russians who could have replaced Finns in the innumerable local telephone exchanges.

The Imperial Ministry of Finance compiled a list of a couple of hundred officials, ready to leave for Finland to sequester the treasury of the Finnish state, the Bank of Finland, the funds of the Finnish local government districts, private banks and private persons, so that the revolutionaries could not steal them.¹³⁹

Military judges were also to be ordered to Finland to deal with the numerous crimes expected against martial law. The Ministry of the Interior named prison guards and planned convoys for political criminals who were to be transported to Russia in order to avoid overcrowding in Finnish prisons.¹⁴⁰

department, delo 50(58-5), National Archives of Finland.

136 Svodnaia vedomost', iavki na sbornye punkty chinov razlichnykh vedomst v sluchae ob'iavleniia v Finliandii voennago polozheniia, s ukazaniem chisla ikh i na kakoi den' oni iavliatsia. KKK 1913, I department, delo 1_4, chast obshchaia, National Archives of Finland.

137 Ministerineuvoston asetus posti- ja lennätinyhteyksien järjestämisestä sotajoukkoihin milloin ne liikkuvat Suomessa 23. II 1910; Seyn to Kokovtsov 28. I 1913. KKK 1913, I department, delo 1-4, chast obshchaia, National Archives of Finland.

138 Seyn to Stolypin 24. II 1911. KKK 1910, II department, delo 9-I, National Archives of Finland.

139 Svodnaia vedomost'...

140 Svodnaia vedomost'...

The gendarmes compiled a list of a couple of hundred Finns who were to be arrested at the moment of the declaration of martial law. The list was kept up to date until war broke out in 1914.¹⁴¹

Seyn also asked for reliable police reinforcements to replace unreliable Finnish policemen. He was promised an expeditionary force of eight hundred men on foot and four hundred mounted, from Vitebsk and Vologda,¹⁴² and 136 men for routine police duties.¹⁴³ Compiling a list of officials to replace the administrators who should join the rebellion proved a problem, because Finns were unreliable and no competent Russians were available.¹⁴⁴

Then there was the problem of pay and the funding of the increased costs for all these people. In the case of mobilization, there would have been no problem, because wartime expenditure was foreseen in the regulations, but troops and other people were to be sent to Finland without a mobilization of reserves, as stated above. The Council of Ministers decided that the Ministry of Finance would have to find the money; for example 2,370,815 roubles for the Ministry of War.¹⁴⁵

The customs service had to be reformed, too, to prevent the illegal import of weapons for the *Voima*.¹⁴⁶ The Council of Ministers ordered the Finnish Customs Service to increase their vigilance, but the Service did not obey, because the order had been given by the Russian government and was not based on Finnish law. The chief of the Customs Service Toivo Boisman was replaced by af Enehjelm, a Bobrikovian police official,¹⁴⁷ but the disloyal personnel were

141 Eremin to Seyn 14. X & 16. X 1913 & 17. V & 22. V 1914. KKK 1913, I department, delo 1–15, National Archives of Finland.

142 Seyn to Kokovtsov 28. I 1913, KKK 1913, I department, delo 1–4; *Svodnaia vedomost'*, iavki na sbornye punkty chinov razlichnykh vedomst v sluchae ob"iavlennii v Finliandii voennago polozheniia, s ukazaniem chisla ikh i na kakoi den' oni iavliatsia. KKK 1913, I department, delo 1–4, chast' obshchaia. National Archives of Finland.

143 Police department to the Governor-General's chancery s.d., KKK 1912, I department, delo 1_10, v. also *Svodnaia*...

144 Seyn to Makarov 26. XI 1911, 17. V 1912, KKK 1911, I department, delo 58–10. National Archives of Finland.

145 Seyn to Kokovtsov 28. I 1913. KKK 1913, I department, delo 1_4, National Archives of Finland.

146 Reskript Glavnokomanduiushchago voiskami Gvardii i Peterburgskago Voennago Okruga na imia Voennago Ministra 23. XII 1909. KKK 1910, I department, delo II 6, National Archives of Finland.

147 *Pamiatnaia zapiska* [on customs service] 25. III/7. IV 1910; Customs Office to the Senate 10. IX 1910; Seyn to Langhoff 18. IX/1. X 1910. KKK 1910, I department, delo XXI 15, National Archives of Finland.

otherwise still there. That was why the Finnish customs offices would have shut down if martial law had been declared, and a few Russian customs offices opened instead, for which purpose the Ministry of Finance compiled a list of 127 officials ready to leave for Finland in twenty-four hours.¹⁴⁸ All Finnish steamships, motorboats and decked sailboats were listed, and sinking or destruction threatened any vessel which would be found moving without leave in the area declared under martial law.¹⁴⁹

The pilot and lighthouse service in Finland was vitally important for the navy, but its personnel had no naval competence, which, the navy complained, had caused the shipwreck of several warships and the running aground of the Imperial yacht in 1908. All Finnish pilots were deemed separatists or foreign spies. Replacing the chief of the service, Lieutenant General Sillman by Admiral Samsonov was therefore not enough, and the Admiralty Council took over the service on 15 February 1912. In protest, 633 officials or 51% of the personnel left the service, and they had to be replaced by naval officers or pilots from the Empire.¹⁵⁰ The Finnish Diet sent a protest, once more meddling in a question of all-Imperial interest. Nicholas II left the protest 'without consequences', of course.¹⁵¹ Gradually, many new Finnish pilots were employed or the old pilots returned to work, so that in 1917 the service was again almost wholly Finnish.¹⁵²

This agitation caused by the Russification of the pilot and lighthouse service gave reason for a new wave of gendarme information about sabotage by the dismissed pilots, who all, in the

148 Svodnaia vedomost'...

149 Order of the Council of Ministers 11. IV 1908 concerning wartime customs regulations on the Finnish coast 11. IV 1908. KKK 1913, I department, delo 1_4; Instruktsiia sudam voenno-tamozhennoi okhrany u beregov Finliandii, S.Peterburg 1913, KKK 1911, I department, delo 51; Proekty ob"iavleniia, KKK 1914, I department, delo 1_4. National Archives of Finland.

150 *Kratkii ocherk o sostoianii lotsmanskogo i maiachnogo vedomstva Finliandii, posle podchineniia v 1912 godu Morskomu Ministru*. S.Peterburg 1912. (official leaflet).

151 Seyn to Kokovtsov 30. V 1912; *Osobyi Zhurnal Soveta Ministrov* 27. VI 1912, the Emperor's resolution 30. VII 1912. KKK 1912, II department, delo 15-1, National Archives of Finland.

152 RGAVMF, fond 418, opis 1, delo 342, perepiska ob organizatsii okhrany poberezhia i vodnogo prostranstva Finskogo zaliva, o reorganizatsii lotsmanskogo i maiachnogo vedomstva v Finliandii v finskoe uchrezhdenii i ob okhrane v sviazi s etom, prav russkikh sluzhashchikh v etikh uchrezhdeniakh 25. IX 1914-28. XII 1917.

opinion of the gendarmes, seemed to have joined the *Voima*. The Navy Ministry concluded that the only means of fighting the agitation was to declare martial law over the Finnish coastal waters. But the Military District staff was of the opinion that if martial law were declared, it should cover all Finland, not only the coasts, in order to avoid confusion.¹⁵³ A long discussion between the navy, army and foreign office followed, but in November 1913 the plans for the coastal state of war were completed and again a declaration was printed ready to be plastered up when necessary.¹⁵⁴

Declaring martial law in Finland would thus not have been a military operation only, but also a many-sided measure of security, and, in the end, a means of bringing the border country closer to the rest of the Empire, or Russification as the Finns called it. It is probable that the military part of the plan would have succeeded, but the administrative measures were obviously planned so haphazardly that they would have caused much confusion both for the Russians and for the Finns.

Seyn favoured the idea of martial law in Finland, probably in order to make an end of the separatist tendencies in the country. For him personally, it would not have meant any increase in authority because according to the martial law regulations, he would have been subordinated to the military commander-in-chief, as he, indeed, was in August 1914.

The interesting experiment was never made. Stolypin, nervous under the threat of losing the support of the Right, might have accepted Seyn's proposal, but he was murdered on 5 /18 September 1911, and the proposal was discussed in the Council of Ministers under the chairmanship of Kokovtsov, a much more cautious and moderate man. The Council decided that martial law was not the proper way of administration in peacetime; it would only be a confession of Russia's failure to govern a province after one hundred years of domination.¹⁵⁵

153 Zhurnal soveshchaniia po voprosu o vvedenii voennago polozheniia v priberezhnom vodnom raione Finliandii. 19. V 1912. KKK 191, I department, delo 1_8, National Archives of Finland.

154 Osobyi zhurnal Soveta Ministrov 7. XI 1913 po voprosu o vvedenii voennago polozheniia v priberezhnom vodnom raione Finliandii. KKK 1912, I department, delo 1_8, National Archives of Finland.

155 Osobyi Zhurnal Soveta Ministrov 14. X 1911. KKK 1911, I department, delo 42, National Archives of Finland.

The alarming gendarme reports did not cease. According to them, it seemed that the Finns were closing ranks; the Old Finnish conciliatory party was getting closer to their worst opponents, the constitutionalist Swedish and Young Finnish parties, and only a fraction of the Old Finnish party still recommended submitting to Russia's demands. The Social Democrats kept a distance from the bourgeois parties, but their left-wing had sought contact with Russian Socialist Revolutionaries and Anarchists, these reports retailed.¹⁵⁶

The Imperial government also had real difficulties in 1912. A new crisis broke out in the Balkans, and internal dissatisfaction led to strikes, uprisings and attempts at military revolt. In Helsinki 21 sailors were arrested and Admiral N.O. von Essen, commander of the Baltic Fleet, declared his Fleet in a state of war.¹⁵⁷ But no rebellion took place in Finland, and in October Seyn reported that the *Voima* had decided to continue passive opposition.¹⁵⁸ At the beginning of 1913, the history of the *Voima* was again reviewed, with new information on the illegal import of arms, secret training in shooting and skiing, and the acquisition of motor boats and aeroplanes.¹⁵⁹ Foreign spies were also continuing their activities in Finland, it was said, and still the Finnish police did not do anything to prevent it.¹⁶⁰

Yet, it seems that the alarming information was losing credibility. In a survey already made in 1912, by Colonel Balabin, it had been stated that neither the *Voima* nor any plan of rebellion existed in Finland.¹⁶¹ Next year, in 1913, the gendarme activity caused an international public scandal. A retired gendarme official, Leonid Menschikoff, saw the error of his ways and told his story to a

156 Kratkiiia dannia o politicheskoi polozenii v Fin-ii v nachale 1912 goda. KKK 1912, I department, delo 25-V-1 part I, National Archives of Finland.

157 Spravka (Memorandum on the arrests). KKK Hd 105, National Archives of Finland.

158 Seyn to v. Brincken October 1905 (a concept). KKK Hd 105, National Archives of Finland.

159 Spravka o Voime. KKK 1913, I department, delo 39-1; Po dokladu Polkovnika Utgofa o predpolagaemom kontrabandnom vvoze v kraj transporta oruzhiia 7. XI 1912. KKK 1912, I department, delo 8-52; Utgof to Seyn 7. III 1913. KKK 1914, I department, delo 7-2; Minister of the Interior Makarov to Seyn 21. IV and 16. V 1913, Seyn to Makarov 6. VII 1913. KKK 1913, I department, delo 9-3; National Archives of Finland.

160 Spravka ob inostrannom voennom shpionazhe v Finliandii. KKK 1913, I department, delo 20_1, National Archives of Finland.

161 Kujala, *Venäjän hallituksen suunitelmat Suomen palauttamisesta järjestykseen vuosina 1907-1914*, p. 298.

journalist in Stockholm. He revealed that the gendarmes in Finland, lacking a knowledge of the local languages and helpless in the absence of reliable informants, had paid greedy, drunken or mad people for invented stories; if Finland was rebellious, the gendarmes were necessary in their easy jobs there. They also knew that the information they sent pleased their chiefs in St. Petersburg, who needed arguments against Finnish autonomy. Thus they reported, at first, about five thousand smuggled rifles, then about seventy thousand, and finally about two hundred thousand, in spite of not having found a single revolver. When two hundred thousand Finns had been armed, the number could not credibly be increased any more, but the *Voima* was then imaginatively supplied with additional machine guns and quick-firing cannons.¹⁶² At this time, the links between the Okhrana, or security service, and the Socialist Revolutionaries were also revealed, especially the double life of Evno Azev.¹⁶³

After the scandal, the credulous gendarme chief Colonel Utgof was replaced by the more critical Colonel Eremin. Utgof was not fired but appointed to the post of gendarme chief in Warsaw, a duty with even more responsibility attached to it than the Finnish post.

Seyn must have known, perhaps from the very beginning, but at least by this time, that no *Voima* existed since it had been dissolved in 1906.¹⁶⁴ For him, the alarming information had been necessary for pushing out of office Gerard and Boeckmann and for getting increased powers, but now in 1913 he had reached the post of Governor-General. He had, in fact, been able to govern without extraordinary measures, and had little by little made the Finnish administration more obedient. The Finnish Diet could refuse taxes, but the Russified Senate was able to exist on the regular income of the the Finnish state and to pay the military millions. If Finns were left without schools, roads, or social amenities, it was no concern of the Imperial government as long as it did not cause any disorder.

162 Statement on oath by the ancient gendarme official Leonid Menshikov to a notarius in Stockholm 5. IX 1913, copy in KKK Hd 87, n:o 3, delo Voimy, National Archives of Finland.

163 In addition to the KKK, there is much material on the political police activity in the Antti Hackzell Collection, National Archives of Finland.

164 Eremin to Seyn 10. VIII 1913, Seyn to Eremin 31. VIII 1913, KKK 1914, I department, delo 7-2. National Archives of Finland.

In the midst of aliens

The Russian garrisons in the Grand Duchy were islands in a Finnish sea, and probably felt a little isolated and lonely in these years of the growing hostility of the population towards them. Officers often had their families living with them, non-commissioned officers sometimes; for example, at Kuopio, Russian wives demanded aid from the town when their husbands left for war with the 22nd Army Corps in 1914.¹⁶⁵ Since the introduction of general national service, the privates were no longer in permanent service; instead, after their period of active service, they were transferred to the reserve, i.e. sent home to continue their civilian life, and thus, probably had even less chance or inclination than before to mix with the local natives.

The massive red-brick barracks constructed for the new rifle brigades in the 1910s were architectural monuments of Imperial military power. They were also planned according to the then modern ideas of what was healthy and socially proper.¹⁶⁶ The Prussian-model uniforms of the period of Nicholas I and Alexander II period had been changed into more Russian style uniforms under Alexander III, and, though the army regiments were envious of the well-dressed Finnish rifle battalions, they were in fact adequately clothed for the climate. After the Japanese War of 1904-05 had proved that distinct colours made soldiers easily discernible targets, the olive-green mud-like colour had been adopted.

For their spiritual well-being, each brigade had its military chaplain. In the days before the World War, Orthodox churches were built and parishes established in several new garrison towns. Constructed in the neo-Byzantine style the churches are even to-day monuments to Russian imperial aspirations and to the Orthodox element in Russian nationalism.

Contacts between the garrisons and the townspeople have not been studied in detail, nor do the military documents cast much light on them. There must have been a considerable number of commercial transactions between the Russian soldiers and Finnish civilians. "At Hamina people knew Russian, because there were Russian soldiers

165 Kivick, *Venäläisen sotaväen majoittaminen Kuopiossa 1910-1918* (Quartermen Russian Troops in Kuopio 1910-18).

166 Haila, *Venäläinen rationaalisuus; 1910-luvun kasarmiarkkitehtuuri sosiaalisena käytäntönä*. (Russian Barracks Architecture in the 1910s).

and tradesmen there [...]". At Lahti, where the garrison was established in 1909 and the barracks completed in 1911, Russian tradespeople settled around the garrison area.¹⁶⁷

With the increasing friction between Imperial and Finnish politicians, social intercourse between upper-class Finns and Russians decreased. Finnish dissatisfaction was expressed in various forms of boycott: Russian officers had difficulties in finding accommodation at decent prices, and restaurants doubled their bills for Russian clients, schoolboys cried "Ruski pop" to Orthodox priests, a Lutheran priest sent his daughter to a lunatic asylum because she had shown sympathy for Russians...¹⁶⁸

During the Mechelin period, the most eager Russifiers had to leave Finland, and we have seen the influence of their embittered advice on Stolypin. The feelings of those who remained were probably even more bitter, because they saw every day how the local separatists were destroying the Imperial unity in the border country. They also must have felt slighted by the Finns, who believed themselves to be superior Westerners and held the Russians to be dirty Asiatics. A rare witness is Ivan Egorov, son of a non-commissioned officer in Sveaborg. He attended the Russian Alexander *gimnazia* or secondary high school in Helsinki, which had been established for educating Russian-minded Finns, but was in fact patronized only by Russian boys whose fathers served in Finland. For them, the Finns were despicable *Tshukhny*¹⁶⁹, and he remembers a family friend to whom a sufficient proof of the primitive stupidity of the Finns was the fact that they called the horse *he-vo-nen*..¹⁷⁰

During these years, several cases of conflict were reported between the garrisons and the local population, which in some cases may have been serious. However, many of them were probably exaggerated by

167 Halila, *Lahden historia*, (The History of Lahti), pp. 499-500. In spite of the strong interest in local history in Finland, the presence of a Russian garrison is rarely dealt with in any detail in the books, and their economic or demographic importance, if any, is not mentioned. In the eyes of the historians of independent Finland, the Russian soldiers were aliens, who had nothing to do with the local life; at best, the cost to the town administration was remembered, e.g. Lähteenoja, *Rauman kaupungin historia*, (The History of Rauma), vol. IV.

168 Muistioita tärkeimmistä poliittisista tapahtumista ja hallituksenvastaisesta liikkeestä 1899-1903, Hd 97, KKK, National Archives of Finland. (Memorandum on political occurrences and movement against the government).

169 *Tshukhna*, a contemptuous word in Russian for the Finnic peoples.

170 Egorov, *Ot monarkhii ko oktiabriu*.

the military staffs or the Governor-General's chancery, because, collected in the dossier "The abnormal position of Russians in Finland", they served as an argument for a law, in 1912, for equal rights for Russians in the country.¹⁷¹

There was, of course, contact of another kind: "There were also many girls who were left pregnant when the Russians went to war".¹⁷² But very few Russians married Finnish girls; for example, in the garrison town of Kuopio the church register does not tell of a single case,¹⁷³ and most of the relationships were of the temporary sort; "she was only a woman from the suburb [and Russians] caught these women for themselves – no one could rival the soldiers: they could skewer Finns with their bayonets".¹⁷⁴ In a study on prostitution in Finland, Russian clients are mentioned casually, but not studied separately from Finnish customers.¹⁷⁵

Probably most of the illicit relationships were entered into during the war years of 1915–16, when the number of Russians increased and they were scattered in small detachments in the villages close to their defence positions. Socializing grew even more frequent in the revolutionary year of 1917, when the discipline of the army and the norms of civilian society grew more loose.

Politically and nationally conscious Finns thought it a shame, of course: "it was humiliating to see how immorally many Finns had intercourse with the alien garrisons... I heard of many 'engagements' of even educated Finnish girls with Russian soldiers, so it is no wonder that simple servant girls could not ward off the amatory advances... The only solace is that the offspring will be educated in the Lutheran creed of the mother."¹⁷⁶ This was an additional reason for the wish, prevalent in patriotic circles in Finland, to get rid of the Russian presence in the country.

171 Materialy o nenormalnym polozhenii russkikh v krae. KKK Hd 99, n:o 1; 22nd army corps staff 11. III 1911, I department, delo 53-1, National Archives of Finland; in 1909 there were 14 cases, in 1910, 15 to 38, and in 1911, 39 to 89.

172 Haavikko-Hämäläinen, *Ketunkivellä*, (The Biography of Helvi Hämäläinen), pp. 14, 35.

173 Kivick, *Kuopion varuskunta*.

174 Joel Lehtonen, p. 141.

175 Häkkinen, *Rahasta – vaan ei rakkaudesta*, (A study of Prostitution), e.g. pp. 55, 70.

176 Hultin, *Päiväkirjani kertoo*, (the Diary of H.), vol. II, p. 284.

At the beginning of the Russian period, the cultural life of Turku had been enlivened by the Russian officers garrisoned there.¹⁷⁷ By the end of the period, in Helsinki, only Russians patronized the Russian theatre or read the *Finliandskaia Gazeta* of the Governor-General.

The era of nationalism caused problems for the non-Russian Imperial elites, who with a good conscience had served the previous Emperors, but now found that Nicholas II had chosen to be only a Russian monarch. Senator F.W. Schauman, the father of Bobrikov's murderer, was an example of a general who adopted the Finnish constitutionalist position. On the other hand, Vice-Admiral Anders Wirenius, Rear-Admiral Teodor Sillman, Major General Victor Hedlund, and Colonel Paul Kraatz, who were appointed Senators in the Russified Senate, had chosen the Russian side. It was neither an easy or a natural choice. Admiral von Wilcken of the Russian navy married a lady of the Cedercreutz family in Finland, their sons served in the navy and were Russians, while the daughter, Sigrid von Wilcken, married a Thesleff, originally of German stock in Finland, and was a Finn.¹⁷⁸ Men like Carl Gustaf Emil Mannerheim, who continued serving in the Imperial army, were criticized by their family in Finland for serving the oppressor; Mannerheim's brother Carl was among the constitutionalists expelled by Bobrikov to Stockholm. But most of them served the Emperor to the end of the Empire because they did not want to endanger their career, nor – often ignored or not comprehended by modern historians – did they forget their oath to the Emperor and their military honour.

Politically thinking Finns were thoroughly alienated from anything Russian. Juho Kusti Paasikivi, the future President of the Finnish Republic, then a rising star in the Old Finnish party, stated that the moment was not propitious for conciliation with Russia. Konni Zilliacus, the leader of the Activists, was of the opinion that cutting all ties with Russia was vital for Finland's national and democratic development. The constitutionalist leader Pehr Evind Svinhufvud, also a future President, said: "This is no good. We shall be lost if we cannot get rid of Russia". In their meetings, university students dreamed of national independence and a fight against the Russians.¹⁷⁹

177 Nikula, *Turun kaupungin historia 1809–1856*, (The History of Turku 1809–1856), p. 306.

178 Thesleff, *Ihana elämä*, (A Wonderful Life), p. 23–30.

179 Paasikiven muistelmia sortovuosilta, (The Memoirs of Paasikivi from the Years

These were idle dreams as long as no Finnish forces existed. The 22nd Army Corps, by its mere presence, fulfilled its task of guarding Imperial sovereignty in the border country. Finnish autonomy had no international support, now even less than in 1899, because no great power had any reason to meddle in internal Russian affairs.

In spite of the fact that the expressions of the Finnish leaders cited above seem fairly clear, the border country was not definitely lost for Russia. Most of the inhabitants probably accepted the presence of Russians as a fact of life, and outside the circle of politicians, few had any reason to complain of any direct material suffering due to the Russian domination. The Imperial army and navy were certainly not regarded in Finland as an alien army of occupation.

Perhaps, with a different policy the Imperial government might have regained the loyalty of Finns; but it is probable that the government should have been totally different to be able to adopt any other policy. Russia was not in fact directed by anyone, it drifted without clear direction. Kokovtsov had no political programme comparable to the attempts of his predecessor Stolypin to unify the Empire and its government; Nicholas II had forbidden him the gestures of a grand vizier. Kokovtsov was a conscientious bureaucrat, mainly interested in balancing the budget and hoping to see a frictionless flow of events, while, in fact, standing under growing pressure from the Right and having to grapple with the problems of industrial unrest. The Finns he tried to pacify by putting off the worst problems, for example, by transferring the annexation of the Karelian Isthmus to a committee. But Kokovtsov could not definitely avoid the centralizing measures that the Nationalists, Rightists, and the military were demanding in the name of the unity of the Empire and military necessity, disregarding their political consequences.

The development of the ethnic minorities in the border regions of the Empire into modern nations ran against Russia's development into a modern, centralized, nationally unified state, which was, in turn, retarded by strong conservative forces. Factors of military security were only one aspect, even though a vital one, of this problem, which in the end proved fatal for the Romanov Empire.

of Oppression), vol. I, p. 200, vol. II, p. 199; Gummerus, *Aktiivisilta taisteluvuosisilta* (Reminiscences of Activism), pp. 213, 222, 239–243; Enckell, *Poliittiset muistelmiani* (Political Memoirs), p. 12.

ON THE EVE

Plans for a great war revised

Planning for war went on more urgently, as international crises, naval rivalry and arms competition between the Great Powers brought a large-scale conflict ever closer.

New instructions for the mobilization and concentration of the Russian army were given on 1 May 1912. Now, the armies were to be grouped into two fronts or army groups, one against Austria and the other against Germany, each with its commander-in-chief or *glavno-komandaiushchii*, under the authority of a supreme commander-in-chief, *verkhovnyi glavnokomanduiushchii*.

The plan for concentrating troops for the defence of St Petersburg was also reviewed, but its main features remained essentially unchanged, with only a few details revised. From the Viipuri direction, St Petersburg was to be defended by the 50th Division.¹⁸⁰ Kronstadt was held by ten infantry battalions, six artillery battalions, two sapper companies and one mining company. In the region of Ingria–Estonia, a new 62nd Division was positioned in the coastal region, and a similar fresh 79th Division stood by as a general reserve.¹⁸¹

The worst headache of the military staffs in Finland remained unchanged: in a war against the Triple Alliance the army corps would have to fight simultaneously against the external enemy and the local rebel bands – in military and naval plans the *Voima* survived the revelation of the gendarmes' lies. To avoid fatal defeats, the commander of the corps, Lieutenant General Olkhovskii, explained that a fourth brigade and additional cavalry were urgently necessary in the country, and his existing brigades had to be brought up from peacetime to wartime numbers. Sufficient troops had to be stationed in Finland to guarantee the security of the Imperial capital from the north, because in a crisis it might be impossible to transport reinforcements there. Olkhovskii also demanded double stores of munitions because the rebels might cut his supply lines, and he needed

180 Eight battalions and 32 guns at Kuolemajärvi, two battalions and two *sotnii* at Terijoki, six battalions, 16 guns and six *sotnii* at Uusikirkko.

181 RGVA, fond 1343, opis' 3, delo 57, Obshchiiia soobrazheniia otносит'elno vybora punktov dlia pervonachal'nago raspolozheniia i sosredotocheniia voisk 1912.

sappers to repair bridges and other installations which the Finns would destroy.

The commander reminded the Military District staff that a mobilization in Finland might provoke not only a local rebellion but also a general strike, and therefore he would need railway and telegraph troops to secure the communications. It was only with these additional troops that the army corps would be able to fulfil its tasks as a military force and uphold Russian sovereignty in Finland.¹⁸²

For his own political purposes, Governor-General Seyn supported the demands of the military command. More troops were necessary for the interior, since the concentration of garrisons in the south of Finland left most of the country denuded of Russian military forces, which was a serious matter, said the Governor-General, because of the Constitutionalist, Social Democrat, and Pan-Finnish agitation.¹⁸³

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The military authorities also wished to have flotillas on the lakes in the interior against an eventual Swedish lateral attack from the Gulf of Bothnia through the country. Seyn agreed on the necessity of the flotillas for reminding the population of Imperial power and for quelling any rebellion or guerilla movement. But in practice not much was achieved. The army had no ships for the purpose.¹⁸⁴ The navy sent an experimental flotilla of light torpedo boats to Saimaa in 1910, but found their operation rather difficult in the narrow waterways of the lake system, and in vain demanded the cost of the crews (twelve officers, thirty-three non-commissioned officers, and 148 sailors for the eight boats) and maintenance from the War Ministry, who had paid for a flotilla on the Amu Daria in 1895–96.¹⁸⁵

Olkhovskii's main demand was taken seriously and the fourth brigade was approved and started to be formed in the country at the end of 1913, although Sukhomlinov's grand programme for increasing the army strength by half a million men was accepted by the Duma

182 Commander of the 22nd Army Corps to the commander-in-chief of the Guards and St. Petersburg military district 23. XII 1912. Ven sot asiak 11405, rukovodstvo obshch. mobil. National Archives of Finland.

183 Seyn to v. Brincken 9. XI 1911, KKK Hd 14, n:o 5, National Archives of Finland.

184 Seyn to Stolypin 22. II 1911; Statements by Nicholas Nicholaevich 18. III 1911, 28. V 1911; Statements by the Navy Ministry 10. III and War Ministry 3. V 1911, osobyi Zhurnal Soveta Ministrov 4. VIII 1911, protocol of a mixed committee 28. XII 1912. KKK Hd 14, n:o 7, National Archives of Finland.

185 RGAVMF, fond 418, opis' 1 delo 259 ob organizatsii Finliandskoi ozernoi flotilii 5. I 1910-31. XII 1911.

only in 1914. Thus, in 1914, the 22nd Army Corps at long last reached its full strength of thirty-two battalions in sixteen two-battalion rifle regiments (the normal infantry corps had eight four-battalion regiments).

The cadres for the fourth brigade were commandeered from neighbouring detachments.¹⁸⁶ Every brigade was to have four senior officers, nine captains, twenty-seven junior officers, eight officials and one chaplain, and it was specially ordered that the donating detachment must not try to get rid of their bad eggs but send first-class men only. Yunker schools were also combed for suitable officers. Each regiment was to consist in all of ninety-eight non-commissioned officers, 825 enlisted men in the line, seventeen trumpeters and thirty-five other musicians and fifty-five non-combatants,¹⁸⁷ that is of about half the wartime numbers, but it was planned that by 1915 they should be increased to 75% of the full complement.¹⁸⁸ The new regiments were garrisoned in inland and northern towns as Seyn had wished, 13th at Vaasa, 14th in Tampere, 15th at Hämeenlinna, and 16th at Oulu, but they were destined not to stay there for long.

According to the new plan, the mobilization of the fighting troops of the 22nd Army Corps was to take from six to ten days, a shorter period than the previous plan had foreseen. In case of war, the various detachments of the corps were to be mobilized at their garrison towns.¹⁸⁹ The 20th Dragoon Regiment was to make ready at

186 Ten non-commissioned officers, two musicians and 98 enlisted men for each rifle regiment:

- the 13th Regiment at Vaasa, from the 1st Army Corps, the 1st Bn from the 22nd Division, the 2nd Bn from the 24th;
- the 14th Regiment in Tampere, from the 18th Corps, the 1st Bn from the 23rd Division, the 2nd Bn from the 37th Division;
- the 15th Regiment at Hämeenlinna, for the 1st Bn from the 18th Corps and the 50th Division, for the 2nd Bn from the 22nd Corps' 1st Brigade;
- the 16th Regiment at Oulu, from the 22nd Corps, for the 1st Bn from the 2nd Brigade, for the 2nd Bn from the 3rd Brigade.

187 RGVIA, fond 1343, opis' 2, delo 158, Vedomost' komplektovaniia 4 finliandskoi strel'kovoi brigady, i ob uvelichenii shtatnykh sostavov chastei voisk, Glavnoe Upravlenie general'nogo shtaba nachalniku shtaba voisk Gvardii i Peterburgskago voennago okruga 24. IX 1913.

188 RGVIA, fond 1343, opis' 2, delo 158, St Petersburg military district staff to General Staff, December 1913.

189 Corps staff in Helsinki,
1st Brigade in Helsinki with two of its regiments, one in Turku, one at Tammissaari;
2nd Brigade was to mobilize two regiments in Viipuri, one at Mikkeli and one at Hamina;

Lappeenranta, the two sotnias of Orenburg Cossacks in Helsinki as well as the detachment of field gendarmes. An aviation detachment¹⁹⁰ for the army corps was to be mobilized in St Petersburg. Munitions stores, field hospitals, field bakeries and other supply units were to be mobilized at a slower tempo.¹⁹¹

Constructing the barracks for the new troops cost plenty of money; the cost of the building sites for new garrisons amounted to thirteen million roubles or thirty-four million marks, which the army wanted to make the Finnish state pay. Kokovtsov, already routinely used to quarrelling with the Ministry of War on economies, stated that the Finnish Senate had difficulties enough as it was with the general administration of the country and with the military millions. In the end, the Senate scraped together eleven million marks in 1909–14 for this purpose,¹⁹² and the army probably paid the rest.

Finns had been liberated from military service, but their horses were needed for war. Again, a constitutional conflict threatened, because military necessity was all-Imperial but sequestering private property was a question of citizens' rights. The Council of Ministers decided that this question was to be regulated through the all-imperial procedure decreed in 1910, which was so time-consuming that before anything could be accomplished, the war broke out. The army had to buy the horses it needed, in all more than 27,000 horses out of the 294,264 counted in the country in 1914.¹⁹³

The provision of ships, motor boats, and motor cars as well as lorries was also discussed, but even here the legislative measures were not taken in time.

The admirals had been planning a naval reconstruction since 1906,

3rd Brigade at Lahti, Riihimäki, Lappeenranta, Kouvola:

4th Brigade in Tampere, Vaasa, Oulu, Hämeenlinna, one regiment each; artillery in Helsinki, Tuusula, Viipuri, Hämeenlinna, one battalion each;

190 In Russian *division*, perhaps comparable to a squadron, not to be mixed with *diviziia*, a division.

191 Staff of St. Petersburg military district to the commander of 22nd Army Corps 9/22. V 1914 "s dokumentom osoboi vazhnosti", orders for mobilization in force from I.XII 1914. Ven sot asiak 11327, National Archives of Finland.

192 Spravka o raskhodakh finliandskoi kazny na voennyya potrebnosti 1909-1914. KKK 1914, II department, delo 91, National Archives of Finland.

193 Spravka po voprosu o vvedenii v Finliandii voenno-konskoi povinnosti. KKK 1909, II department, delo 55; Osobyi zhurnal Soveta Ministrov 10. X 1913, KKK 1913, II department, delo 21–15; Senate to Seyn 22. II 1916, Seyn to the Ministry of the Interior 27. II 1916, KKK 1914, I department, war delo 4–22, National Archives of Finland.

as related above, but Russia's naval rearmament started in earnest only in 1911. A minimum programme of four dreadnoughts and a few lighter ships had been laid down in 1909, but the Duma was reluctant to give much money to the navy until, in 1911, Admiral I.K. Grigorovich was appointed Navy Minister and purged the notoriously corrupt administration to a certain degree. The four dreadnoughts of the *Gangut* class were completed in 1914–15. In 1911, it was also heard that Turkey was acquiring modern ships, and to counter this threat three big ships were constructed for the Russian Black Sea fleet.¹⁹⁴ The Turkish naval scare also helped a "Law of Imperial Russian Navy" through the Duma in 1912. According to it, in twenty-four years Russia was to create a mighty ocean-going fleet at the cost of 2.7 thousand million roubles. Nicholas II signed the law and stated that "this is a day of great hopes for Russia... the navy will be elevated to the might and power corresponding to Russia's glory and dignity". The Foreign Ministry also wanted a big fleet to support their diplomats.¹⁹⁵ Big battle-cruisers of the *Borodino* class were laid down in 1912–1913, but war and revolution interrupted their construction.¹⁹⁶

To resolve the Near Eastern question, it was planned to carry out a two-pronged attack by the Black Sea fleet from Sevastopol to the Bosphorus and by a Mediterranean flotilla from the French possession of Bizerta to the Dardanelles. These plans were made by the diplomats of the Foreign Office and the admirals of the Naval General Staff, while the army opposed them because the fantastic-sounding plans implied a serious dispersal of forces from the German-Austrian front, where the fate of the Turkish Straits, too, would be decided. Reluctantly a couple of army corps were earmarked for the landing, but in fact these army corps were needed on the main front when the great war did break out.¹⁹⁷

194 *Gangut*, *Petropavlovsk*, *Poltava*, *Sevastopol* of 23,360 tons for the Baltic, *Imperatritsa Mariia*, *Imperator Alexander III*, *Imperatritsa Ekaterina Velikaia* of 22,600 tons for the Black Sea; battlecruisers *Borodino*, *Izmail*, *Kinburn*, *Navarin* of 32,500 tons launched in 1915–16 but never completed, four light cruisers for each sea, nine destroyers of the *Bespokoynyi* class and sixteen of the *Leitenant Ilin* class completed for the Baltic before or during the war. *Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships 1906–1921*, pp. 302–10.

195 Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii...*, p. 157–58.

196 Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii...*, pp. 89–91, 146–49; Adams, "Der Wiederaufstieg der russischer Kriegsmarine in den Jahren 1905–1914"; the most recent and complete work: "Nakanune voyny", *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota*, vol. II, pp. 6–65.

197 Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii...*, p. 160–76. The Straits Question has been dealt with

Sukhomlinov would have liked to give up and destroy Sveaborg as he did with the fortresses on the Prussian border in 1910, but the navy did not consent to this retreat and started demanding fortifications at Reval as well. Construction was started in 1911, and in 1913 the fortresses were transferred from the Ministry of War to the Navy, with the argument that the generals did not understand naval strategy. Strong coastal fortresses were established at Porkkala and Naissaari (Nargen) to cover the navigation route through the Gulf of Finland, which was also to be closed with minefields. There was no time left before the war broke out for the planned high seas fleet to grow strong enough to fight on the open sea, and the plan was to keep the few completed big ships close behind the defence position. With their heavy guns they were to destroy any enemy ships that might break through the minefield. Flank positions were planned in the Moon Sound and the Turku archipelago, from where light craft could have attacked the passing enemy. The new positioning, due to be completed in 1918, was christened "the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great". St Petersburg was the main centre of shipbuilding as well as other arms production, and Kronstadt remained a strong fortress and the main base for equipping and repairing ships.

The naval fortifications and construction programmes were far from completed when the war broke out in August 1914, as was also the naval base of Reval, which was why Sveaborg continued to serve as a fortress and naval base. In 1909 the Sveaborg garrison consisted of about 1,500 men in the infantry and one thousand in the artillery, a couple of hundred sappers, forty men in the quartermaster's branch and thirty-two in the military hospital, in all about 4,300 soldiers, with double the number under the war-time nominal strength (9,892 men).¹⁹⁸

Admirals did not have comparable importance to generals in the formation of Russian policy towards Finland, but the naval defence plans had their importance because, as we have seen, the naval forts and bases were among the main objectives of defence in the country.

in numerous studies, mainly on the basis of E.A. Adamov, *Konstantinopol i proliiv*, vols. I - IV, Moskva 1925-26, also translated into German as *Die Europäischen Mächte und die Türkei während des Weltkrieges, Konstantinopol und die Meerengen, nach den Geheimdokumenten des ehem. Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten*, Red. A. Adamov, vols. I - IV, Dresden 1930-32.

198 RGAVMF, fond 1347, opis' 1, delo 67 o lichnom sostave chastei garnizona Sveaborgskoi kreposti v mirmoe vremia 1. I 1908-27. XI 1909.

Ships could not play the political role which army garrisons did, but the existence of coastal defence had its political importance in keeping the expected enemy distant from Finland; and sailors did have their role in history before the war ended.

On the very eve of the outbreak of the European war, General Iu.N. Danilov, Quartermaster General of the Russian army in the first phase of the war, calculated that if Germany directed its main attack against France, there would probably not remain enough German forces in the east for a landing in Finland. If the Swedes should conquer parts of western Finland, it would have no influence on the operations on the continental main front. But if Germany only took up defensive positions in the west and turned her main forces towards the east, she might attempt a landing to threaten St Petersburg and compel Russia to disperse her forces.

A direct German naval attack on St Petersburg was not probable, because Kronstadt was strong enough to deny access to the capital. A landing in the Gulf of Riga would mainly threaten the rear communications of the Russian main army. A much more probable case was an attack through Finland, where a good network of roads favoured the enemy, and the population was hostile to Russia. A major landing was possible at Koivisto, while even a minor landing could be successfully carried out in the west of Finland, because the Russian troops there were weak and scattered, and the enemy troops could easily be supplied by sea.¹⁹⁹

The role of Finland in the Imperial Russian defence plans as the defence glacis for St Petersburg had remained constant in all war plans. It was always the case that only the minimum number of troops were to be detached to defend western Finland. Only the coastal strip of the country was regarded as an eventual theatre of war, while the interior was fit only for guerilla bands.²⁰⁰

The war plans for 1908–14 in a way implied a criticism of Seyn's and even Bobrikov's work. These men had started their work in order to bring Finland closer to the rest of the Empire and to make easier the defence of the Imperial capital. We have seen the difficulties the

199 Danilov's memoir 10/24. IV 1914, p. 134–39, 157–58; an appendix in Franz, *Russlands Eintritt in den Weltkrieg*.

200 Debesh, *Osobennosti boevykh deistvii na Finliandskoi mestnosti.*, pp. 7–9; W., "Kortfattad öfversikt af den värnepliktiga finska militärens utbildning åren 1881–1901", pp. 571–609.

war planners had to take into account because the Finnish population grew ever more hostile as a result of the policy of the Imperial government and its representatives in the country.

The generals never felt, though, that the attempt at bringing the border provinces closer to the Empire had been wrong or should have been changed. In their Imperial way of thinking, coloured by nationalism, they were not able to take into account the view of the nationalities, they only complained that "the heavy burden of the War Ministry was to organize defence against the neighbouring million-strong armies, and simultaneously to watch the forty million non-Russian subjects [and] to maintain law and order in the interior of the realm".²⁰¹

The Russian government did their best, or worst, to keep together the Empire and to prevent its structure from collapsing, but dynastic monarchism was not enough to keep the Russian masses satisfied, nor was Russian chauvinism the right idea for attaching the nationalities to the principal nation. Of course, it is not certain that any policy could have made the Finns eager to remain the Tsar's subjects once the national idea had taken root in the Grand Duchy.

However that may be, Russia, wanting to remain a Great Power, was inescapably involved in international power politics and unable to avoid being drawn into the great conflict of the European system in 1914.

Britain no longer an enemy

Defeat and revolution in 1905-06 made it clear to Stolypin and the Minister of Foreign Affairs Izvol'skii that Russia had to desist from advancing in Asia. Britain, Russia's old rival, faced the growing might of Germany and had insufficient forces for Imperial defence on the distant Asian frontiers. France, eager to avoid being drawn into a conflict of her old (since 1894) ally Russia and her new (since 1904) friend Britain, was able in 1907 to help them put aside their rivalry and to join the *entente cordiale*.

Though the old animosity was slow to disappear among the Russian military men, Britain was no longer the 'naval enemy'. The Baltic Sea had lost part of its previous importance for the Royal Navy,

²⁰¹ Kuropatkin, *Memorien*, p. 110.

because tar and hemp were no longer necessary for their ships. Nevertheless, freedom of the seas was an ancient principle of British naval and commercial policy, and British diplomacy stressed the necessity of free access to the Baltic through the Danish Straits.

It is true that Admiral Sir John Fisher, when planning operations for a war against the growing German fleet, thought about a break-through into the Baltic, a landing on the Pomeranian coast, and an advance to Berlin of a British Expeditionary Force. But the threat of mines, torpedoes and submarines in the confined passages leading into the Baltic clearly made this plan impracticable. It was therefore planned to send the Expeditionary Force across the Channel to the Western front, while the Royal Navy would resort to the strategy of a distant blockade of Germany from Rosyth and Scapa Flow. In negotiations for a naval agreement with Russia in 1914, the British did not bind themselves to send any support for the Russians to the Baltic but only promised to tie down the main force of the German fleet in the west. A similar naval agreement was made with the French, who promised to maintain their superiority in the Mediterranean against the Turks, after dealing with the Austrian navy, while the Russians were to move on the Bosphorus.²⁰²

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The question of closing the Baltic Sea

The German navy looked forward to the day when they could fight it out on equal terms with the Royal Navy in the North Sea. As for the Baltic, they hoped that the British fleet could be kept out, and the Baltic be made a *mare clausum Teutonicum*, forbidden for outsiders. Previously, the Russians had favoured the idea and they had probably even started the talks to this end – at least it was the Russian professor of international law, Fedor Fedorovich von Martens, who had first proposed the idea of closing the Danish Straits in 1903. But then there arose, in 1904, the problem of not being able to send their own Baltic fleet out into the ocean. The Germans dearly loved to see Admiral Rozhdestvenskii's fleet steam out of the Baltic through the Belt, nor had they any wish for a precedent which could have been used as a pretext to close other straits in far-away seas against their own *Kaiserliche Marine*.

202 Sweet, "The Baltic in British Diplomacy before the First World War".

The solution, for the Germans, was to dominate Denmark and put the Danish Straits under German defence. In 1903–08, the younger Moltke, the chief of the German General Staff, pressed Denmark to give a binding promise to join the German side in a future war. The Danes, with their weak armed forces, engaged themselves to observe a policy of friendship and co-operation with their frightening southern neighbour. But, in 1914, Moltke had no spare forces for the occupation of Denmark, as he had threatened, and the small country did not join the war. The *Kaiser Wilhelm Kanal*, completed in 1914, made it possible for the Germans to transfer their fleet from the North Sea to the Baltic and back as might be necessary. The Danes mined their Straits against any trespassers, but the international passage of the Sound remained open in principle and had to be watched by the Germans.²⁰³

Germanic Swedes against the Slavs?

Sweden and Russia had fought each other for centuries, but the wars had ended in 1809, and in 1812–15 they had been allies. In 1854 Sweden had not joined the Western Powers in their crusade against the Eastern giant, and in the second half of the century Sweden was militarily weak, with an ancient *indelta* system of recruitment and obsolete warships. Then, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Sweden joined the European armaments race, modernized her army and constructed armoured coastal battleships. In the atmosphere of the armed peace, the Swedes believed that the Russification of Finland by Bobrikov and Seyn aimed at the creation of a base for the annexation of the whole of Scandinavia. On the map, the north-western arm of Finland stretched out towards the northern Atlantic, and Russian tinkers in Sweden were believed to be spying out the country for the General Staff in St Petersburg.²⁰⁴

Many members of the Swedish court circles, officer corps and other elites were Germanophiles and Russophobes, who hoped for German

203 In my book *The Baltic Question 1903–1908* I have discussed these problems in detail. The Danish problem has been presented by Troels Fink in his studies: *Spillet om dansk neutralitet 1905–1909*; *Ustabil balance, Dansk udenrigs- og forsvarspolitik 1894–1905*; and *Deutschland als Problem Danmarks*.

204 Åselius, *The "Russian menace" to Sweden; the Belief System of a Small Power Security Elite in the Age of Imperialism*.

support against the menacing Slav Empire. As for Russia, she supported the Norwegian striving for separation from the Scandinavian Union in 1905 in order to weaken Sweden, but Britain gained more from the divorce because Norway's unprotected merchant fleet was more dependent on British than on Russian friendship.²⁰⁵

Russia's stationing of troops on the Åland Islands in 1906 – and the consequent attempt to liberate the Empire from the servitude of demilitarization – frightened the Swedes and made them to draw nearer to Germany, but not as near as the Germans might have hoped or the Russians believed. In 1910, the German General Staff started discussions with their Swedish colleagues about the possibility, should war occur, of an attack by two Swedish army corps on Finland in order to tie down an equal number of Russians there, and then to threaten the Russian capital, in order to draw additional forces away from the German front. This was exactly what the Russians expected, as we have seen. But, in fact, these discussions took place only between staff officers, and as soon as the Swedish government learned of them, they were stopped. Strict neutrality remained the official policy of Sweden, and her arming was aimed at the protection of her independence, and was not devised for pro-German and anti-Russian adventures.²⁰⁶ Of course, the Russians could not know this and they counted Sweden among their future enemies in the expected great war against Germany.

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German views on the naval situation in the Baltic

Before 1904, the German naval staffs believed that until the Royal Navy were defeated, they could only observe whatever the enemy might undertake on their coasts in the Baltic, and that, correspondingly, "if the Russians have the least bit of initiative, they will dominate the Baltic sea, and we can even lose Pillau and Danzig".²⁰⁷ Even after the debacle of Tsushima, the Tsar's battleships which had been completed after the Japanese war could, from Libau, make the situation 'uncomfortable' for the Germans. But, in fact, Russian naval defence was withdrawn to the eastern end of the Gulf

205 Omang, *Norge og stormaktene 1906–1914*.

206 Lindberg, *Bakom borggårdskrisen; Tyskland föreslår militär konvention med Sverige 1910*; Lindberg, *De svensk-tyska generalstabsförhandlingarna år 1910*.

207 Which even the Russians knew: Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii...*, p. 233.

of Finland,²⁰⁸ as we saw above, and Libau was abandoned in 1910 as a major naval base.

Then, for a while, the political situation also seemed favourable for the Germans after the Bosnian crisis of 1908-09, because neither Britain nor France had supported Russian designs on the Balkans. Thus there might have existed a chance of a naval duel between Russians and Germans. But even if neutral, Britain was dangerous and had to be watched with sufficient force in the North Sea. The General Staff of the German army did not believe in the possibility of a limited war on one front only. They supposed that the fleet could merely be kept in its defensive position on the Elbe estuary.

The navy was not satisfied with planning for such a humble role. They dreamed of an attack on the Russian coasts to tie down enemy troops and to cause disorder in the rear of the Tsar's army.²⁰⁹ They supposed that the few Russian ships would be reluctant to join battle, though the commander of the Russian Baltic fleet, von Essen was known to be an energetic and intelligent leader. The Russian torpedo craft which were still based at Libau were deemed the most dangerous part of the enemy fleet. Therefore, bombarding Libau was to be the first stage in the future naval war on the Baltic Sea. After that, Russia's coasts could be raided and her maritime trade cut. Threatening moves at sea would keep the St Petersburg garrison at home and away from the front facing the German army.²¹⁰

The army was asked whether they would march towards Moscow or towards St. Petersburg, whether they planned landings on the Gulf of Finland or on the Gulf of Riga, and whether they wished for naval support. The General Staff answered that no march towards the east

208 Promemoria über die strategische Bedeutung des Kriegshafens Libau 10. III 1893, BA – MA RM 5/v 1632; Vorarbeiten zu den Operations-Plänen gegen Russland vom 15. Dezember 1892 bis Nov. 1908; Denkschrift über das Verhalten der deutschen Ostflotte im Kriege Deutschland gegen Zweibund 20. III 1903 BA–MA RM 5/v 1629; Operationspläne gegen Russland in Europa vom März 1903 bis Juni 1913.

209 Zum Immediatvortrag 8. IV 1909, BA–MA RM 5/v 1629 Operationspläne gegen Russland in Europa vom März 1903 bis Juni 1913. – *Immediatvortrag* means papers referred by any office directly to the Emperor, without any intervening hand. There were several *Immediatstelle* in the German navy – the Navy Ministry, the Admiralty Staff, the commander-in-chief of the High Seas Fleet, the commander of the Baltic Fleet. The inability of William II to control these as well as similar military and civil authorities created the notorious *Führungschaos* in German government.

210 Zum Immediatvortrag 9. III 1909. BA–MA RM 57v 1629.

was planned nor any landings intended, but if something should happen in the east, a naval threat against Libau might be useful in tying down one Russian army corps in Livonia.²¹¹

Then the Russians started constructing dreadnoughts, the number of their light forces increased, and the naval situation in the Baltic Sea was no longer so favourable to the Germans. However, a major Russian attack was regarded as improbable, because their bases were so distant from the German coast. But torpedo craft from Libau could be expected at Danzig on the third day of war, and another attack from Helsinki on the tenth day. Mining attempts could be expected even further to the west, because the Russians were known to have trained for mine warfare.²¹²

A Russian landing on the German Baltic coast was deemed probable only with British help, which could only arrive after the Royal Navy had destroyed the German fleet on the North Sea. But even then it might be hoped that the British would be wary of sending their big ships into the Baltic through the Danish Straits, where mines and torpedoes would make any operation dangerous.²¹³

In the summer of 1914, the Germans heard about the Russo-British naval talks and surmised that Britain was financing the reconstruction of the Russian fleet in order to divide the German *Hochseeflotte*. A British naval visit at Reval in June 1914 was seen as a proof of the existence of such plans.²¹⁴

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German plans on the eve of the war

On the eve of the Great War, all modern German battleships were concentrated in the North Sea. Only obsolete coastal armoured ships of the *Siegfried*-class were left in the Baltic Sea with five light cruisers, seven torpedo boats and three submarines. From Kiel, they

211 Sitzung im Generalstab am 18. März 1909. BA-MA RM 5/v 1633 Vorarbeiten zu den Operationsplänen gegen Russland von November 1908 bis Mai 1913.

212 Operationspläne gegen Russland in der Ostsee für das Sommerhalbjahre 1912, 30. IV 1912. BA-MA RM 5/v 1629; Admiralstabsreise Sommer 1913 & Grosse Admiralstabsreise 1913 Sommer. BA-MA RM 5/v 1630, Operationspläne gegen Russland in Europa vom März 1913 bis Juli 1914.

213 An den Chef des Generalstabes der Armee 29. IX 1912. BA-MA RM 5/v 1629; Möglichkeit einer russischen Landung an der deutschen Ostseeküste 16. X 1912. BA-MA RM 5/v 1633.

214 Marine-Attaché (in London) Erich v. Müller 8. VI 1914. BA-MA RM 5/v 1178 Englisch-französische Beziehungen vom 10 Sept 1910 bis Dec 1917.

were to fend off an attack from the east through the Bornholm Strait and from the west through the Danish Straits. Big ships of the *Hochseeflotte* could temporarily be transferred to the Baltic through the North Sea Canal, but not for long periods; and in any case, no decisive results could be obtained even in a victorious battle on the Baltic Sea, because the Russians could always retreat behind their fortresses.

If Britain remained neutral, with only France and Russia as Germany's enemies, the eight old battleships of the *Deutschland* class could be detached from the main forces to guard Germany's Baltic coasts and harbours. If Austria and/or Italy could engage the French fleet in the Mediterranean, then a squadron even of dreadnoughts could be sent to the Baltic to blockade the Russian coast. But the Gulf of Finland could not be penetrated before the Russian forces had been whittled down by attacks from torpedo boats, minelayers, and submarines.²¹⁵

The old plan from the 1890's was still the basis for a very improbable duel with Russia. Such a war was to start by a surprise attack on Libau, Reval and Helsinki in order to eliminate Russian torpedo boats and submarines based there.²¹⁶ The German fleet would sail secretly to the Gulf of Finland and on the declaration of war it would bombard Reval and sink blockships in the narrows of Kustaanmiekka at Helsinki. Then the Gulf would be blockaded at Pihlajakari–Naissaari or on the more western line Russarö–Odensholm. Blockade on the open sea, for example between Libau and Öland, was considered but found to require too much force and be likely to cause conflicts with neutral countries.

The Gulf of Riga was to be blockaded with guardships and mines. In the Gulf of Bothnia the telegraph cables from Finland to Sweden might be cut, although German spies might need these communications.²¹⁷

The Moon Sound was deemed the best base for the blockading forces. There was space enough there for anchoring even big squadrons, the island position would be safe from land attacks, enemy

215 Verteilung der deutschen Seestreitkräfte auf die Nordsee und Ostsee im Kriege gegen Frankreich und Russland und bei neutralen, jedoch unsicheren Haltung Englands. BA-MA RM 5/v 1630.

216 Die Sperrung russischer Häfen 3. II 1913. BA-MA RM 5/v 1633.

217 A memorandum: Berlin, den 18 März 1913. BA-MA RM 5/v1630.

torpedo craft attacking from Turku or the Gulf of Finland could be sighted in time, and the ice-free sailing season lasted from March to December.²¹⁸

The battleships transferred from the *Hochseeflotte* would be waiting for the Russian fleet, which was expected to come out at this provocation. The aim of the operation would be the domination of the Baltic Sea, achieved by the destruction of the Russian fleet in a decisive battle.²¹⁹

Old and new methods

Obviously it was more pleasant for the German Baltic fleet staff to plan for the improbable duel between Russia and Germany than for the probable war against the Western Powers, in which Germany would have no forces left for the Baltic. The idea of a big-gun battle remained the essential feature of the plan. Torpedoes, mines and submarines were mentioned several times, but they were only regarded as secondary weapons and useful only in narrow straits and harbour approaches. By the end of the nineteenth century, it had been estimated that blockading the Gulf of Finland would have needed too many mines,²²⁰ but in 1914 it was realized that the Russians might be able to close the Gulf with their mines. The mine was regarded as a deceitful weapon, fit for devious Slavs, not really a proper weapon for the Germans, as a young naval officer said to his superior who proposed using this novel arm.²²¹

Commercial war was not planned, only a battle between warships. Even the eventual domination of the Baltic was seen as a means of keeping down the enemy naval force. Russia's commerce would be cut by the naval blockade of her coasts or with the closure of the Danish Straits, not by any operations against civilian ships.

On the eve of the war, aeroplanes were not deemed useful, but the range of the *Zeppelin*, 2,000 kilometres, was sufficient for the stretch

218 Stützpunkte; Die Sperrung der russischen Häfen 3. II 1913. BA-MA RM 5/v 1630.

219 Krieg Dreibund gegen Zweibund 30.VII 1914. BA-MA RM 5/v 1630.

220 Denkschrift betreffend den Streuminenkrieg auf dem östlichen Kriegstheater 15. II 1896. BA-MA RM 5/v 1632.

221 "Alles Unsinn, die Mine liegt den Germanen nicht!" O.d.O., 6. IV 1916. BA-MA RM 5/v 4940 Operationsdenkschriften des Ostseebefehlshabers für Ostseekriegführung vom August 1914 bis 10 März 1917.

from Kiel to Kronstadt. The attempt was considered rather risky because of the weather and Russian defences, but objectives worth bombing were listed: anchored warships, torpedo boats and submarines as well as bridges and docks at Libau, Helsinki and Reval.²²²

Inducing enemy subjects to rise against their government was discussed, too. As early as 1884, the German consul in Helsinki proposed that Finnish pilots could be enlisted in the German service to steer an attacking fleet. The conscience of the inhabitants of the archipelago would not deter them from committing potentially treasonable acts if Finnish aspirations were promised support, because the people did not regard Russia as their fatherland.²²³ This idea was seriously taken up in naval planning only in 1912, when it was hoped that the pilots dismissed in the Russification of the Finnish pilot and lighthouse organization would eagerly enter German service because they were poor and despised Russia; they could also be blackmailed, "although violence should not be carried too far".²²⁴

Information on the Russian fleet could be obtained from Finnish visitors to Germany, especially ships' captains. Agents were also sent to Libau, Riga, St Petersburg and Helsinki, before the outbreak of the war, to collect information on enemy movements, and to acquire maps and nautical charts. Communications ran through Stockholm, where a German naval captain was stationed for the purpose.²²⁵

Plans beyond the Baltic Sea

The Germans did not seriously plan permanent conquests beyond the Baltic Sea before the outbreak of the war, but the possibility was sometimes discussed. In 1896, the idea was aired with an explanation that the Finns felt sympathy for Germany and that many people of German origin lived in Estonia, Livonia and Courland.²²⁶ More reasons

222 Admiralstabsreise Sommer 1913 & Grosse Admiralstabsreise 1913 Sommer. BA-MA RM 5/v 1630.

223 Lootsen für die finnischen Schären, s.d. (1896). BA-MA RM 5/v 1632.

224 Verwendung von finnischen und schwedischen Lotsen 30. I 1913. BA-MA RM 5/v 1629; Bericht über die Aussichten der Gewinnung finnischer Kriegslotsen. BA-MA RM 5/v 1634.

225 There is plenty of documentation on the spies in: BA-MA RM 5/v 1440, 1441, 1442 Russland, Ganz geheime Nachrichten, vom Februar 1905 bis November 1912, vom Oktober 1912 bis August 1913, vom Oktober 1913 bis July 1914.

226 Operationspläne für die östliche Kriegsschauplatz 18. XII 1896, p. 161. BA-MA RM 5/v 1628.

for such hopes were found in 1905-06: the Baltic Germans had been the most loyal subjects and servants of the Tsar, but then their autonomy had been filched away in the 1880s and now they had been left helpless victims of the revolutionaries. It was believed that they now wished to join Germany. The population in those countries was not entirely German, but in five years the Estonians and Letts would turn into good Germans. The march through the Baltic countries would be easy, if the provinces were promised autonomy or union with Germany.

An advance on St. Petersburg would be even easier through Finland, and occupying a base on Åland would be a starting-point for revolutionizing and conquering the country. The Swedes in Finland would be eager to join the Germans, while the Finns would probably remain passive.²²⁷ Russification was the reason for the hatred against the Russians, which would probably cease if Russia restored Finland's autonomy.²²⁸

These views were only discussed in reports on public opinion in the coastal countries, and no military or naval plans were made for a landing in the Baltic provinces or in Finland, not to speak of any plans for military occupation or permanent conquest. But it is interesting to see that the ideas of the defending staffs in St Petersburg and those of the potential conquerors did run in a parallel direction.

For the history of Finland, it is also interesting to note that the German staffs were aware of the separatist feeling in the country, which had been explained to the European civilized public by Finnish constitutionalist propaganda against the Russian oppression from 1899 onwards. No Power had taken official notice of the Finnish complaints, but a time was to come when the Germans would see that their own interests might be served by Finnish treason.

227 It was a common mistake to call the Swedish-speaking people in Finland Swedes, and only the Finnish-speaking Finns; in spite of the language barrier and quarrel, there have never existed two distinct nations in the country, partly because Russian oppression united the people and partly because they lived in the country cut off from Sweden in 1809 and under the same conditions.

228 *Stimmung in den Baltischen Provinzen*, Marine Attaché für die Nordischen Reiche 14.VI 1909. BA-MA RM 5/v 1437; *Marine Attaché für die Nordischen Reiche von Hintze* 15. IV 1908. BA-MA RM 5/v 1440; *Bericht über eine Erkundungsfahrt nach Russland, Finnland und Schweden* 5. VI – 1. VII 1911, von Hauptmann v. Hoffmann. BA-MA RM 5/v 1440.

The End of the Empire

THE GREAT WAR

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In August 1914, playing Great Power politics involved Russia in a war which was to be called the Great War and afterwards the First World War. The defeats in the Crimean War and in the Japanese War had seriously shaken the Empire, and even now a few people warned against the adventure of a new war. Witte and Kokovtsov thought that no essential conflict of interests existed between Russia and the Germanic empires; on the contrary, it would have been preferable for the three conservative Empires to join forces against revolution and the liberal West. But reasons of national pride and political prestige made such a retreat unpalatable to the majority of statesmen and the political public in Russia. There had been diplomatic defeats in the Balkans twice, in 1908–09 and 1912–13. Then, Russia's position in the Orient had been threatened by Austria, but in 1914 Germany had emerged as the principal rival. A third diplomatic retreat in the Balkans would have shattered Russia's prestige and position as a Great Power, would have made her an Asiatic country, a victim of rather than a participant in the international system, like Turkey, Persia, China and even India. Russia entered the war to aid Serbia, not because of Serbia but because of her own existence as a Great Power.

The main battles of the Great War were to be fought on the continental frontiers, but naval blockades in the North Sea, in the Black Sea, and in the Baltic Sea also contributed their lethal effect on the belligerents.¹

¹ There are innumerable books on any front of the Great War. Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front 1914–1917* is a classic; Bruce W. Lincoln, *Passage through Armageddon: the Russians in war and revolution*, gives a balanced picture, is readable and enjoyable, though unreliable in details.

Opening moves in the Baltic Sea

At the beginning of the war, in August 1914, Russian minelayers laid their mines between Porkkala and Naissaari (Nargen) as planned, and the fleet, with the dreadnoughts *Gangut* and *Petropavlovsk* among them when completed, was anchored behind the walls of Sveaborg waiting for the expected German attack. Next year the *Poltava* and the *Sevastopol* also joined the Baltic fleet. In addition, four destroyers and one submarine had been completed from the great programme of naval construction. Wartime emergency programmes were hastily drawn up for submarines, minelayers and torpedo boats; in 1915 eight destroyers and eight submarines were completed and in 1916 an additional eight destroyers and thirteen submarines.²

The capital ships were not allowed to run into any danger but remained a fleet in being, while their sailors grew ever more bored and frustrated.

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In the first days of August 1914 a German landing was expected at any moment, which caused a some panic in Helsinki, but no enemy appeared. Soon it was learned that the enemy had no serious naval force in the Baltic Sea, only the obsolete *Siegfried*-class armoured ships for coastal guard, five old armoured cruisers and three small cruisers for reconnoitring eastwards, and elderly ships of the line of the *Deutschland*-class guarding the western approaches to the Danish Straits against the British.³

The commander of Russia's Baltic fleet, Admiral von Essen, had not liked the withdrawal from Libau to the Gulf of Finland nor did he approve of passively waiting for an eventual attack by the enemy. In the first days of the war, he heard that Swedish warships had moved to the vicinity of Öland Island, and he started steaming westwards to sink the Swedish fleet should they not promise to stay neutral. The raid would probably have pushed Sweden to join in the war on German side, but von Essen was called back when his intention became known in St Petersburg at the last moment.⁴

However, von Essen was allowed to operate his old and tactically obsolete⁵ armoured cruisers to provoke the German fleet and tempt

2 Conway's *All the World's Fighting Ships 1906–1920*, p. 292.

3 RGAVMF, fond 418, opis' 1, delo 400, Svedeniia o protivnikom na Baltiiskom teatre 11. VIII–5. X 1914.

4 Petrov, *Podgotovka Rossii...* pp. 207, 231.

them into a great battle in the minefield in the Gulf of Finland. This plan did not work because the German fleet remained in the North Sea. When the autumn nights turned dark, von Essen's armoured cruisers started mining German coasts and passages.⁶

The construction of the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great was continued with increased vigour. International law was ignored during the war and in 1915 the Åland (Ahvenanmaa) Islands were included in the defence zone. The Turku-Åland Island Position of the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great was continually fortified in 1915-16 with coastal batteries of various calibres from 45mm to 12". Old cruisers, gunboats, torpedo boats and submarines were also posted in the archipelago.⁷

Reval had been intended for the new naval base, but construction of the Reval Naval Port of Emperor Peter the Great was only beginning. The naval fortress also took time to complete; coastal batteries of 6" guns were positioned in 1915, and heavier 10" to 12" guns were taken over from old battleships which had been broken up, but the new big guns of 14" were slow to appear and the main batteries were not erected until 1916, eight guns on the Estonian side of the Gulf and four guns on island of Mäkiluoto on the Finnish side.⁸

Sveaborg was hastily strengthened as a temporary wartime base. On a few small cliffs on the seaward front of the fortress batteries were constructed to keep the Kruunuvuorenselkä naval anchorage

5 They were slower than the dreadnoughts, and badly protected against mines and torpedoes.

6 Greger, *Die russische Flotte im ersten Weltkrieg 1914-1917*; Kääntönen, "Itämeri – unohdettu I maailmansodan rintama". ("The Baltic Sea, a Forgotten Front of the First World War" – though it is not at all forgotten by the nations of the Baltic region).

7 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 2, delo 3, Abo-Alandskaja ukreplenniaia pozitsiia 1915-1916, p. 44: kvartirnoe rospisanie garnizona ostrova Oland; p. 65: plan kampanii na 1917 god (includes a list of the forces involved).

Freiman, "Pietari Suuren merilinnoitus, erittäinkin sen meririntama v. 1909-1913 suunnitelmien mukaan" (Peter the Great's naval Fortress, with particular reference to its maritime Front according to the Plans of the Years 1909-1913); Erkki Hannula, "Ahvenanmaan asema maailmansodassa" (Åland during the World War); Lehonkoski, "Viron rannikon linnoitukset ja Viron saarten valtaus maailmansodan aikana" (The Fortifications of the Estonian Coast and the Seizure of the Estonian Islands in the World War); Oksala, Venäläisten linnoitustyöt Ahvenanmaalla ja Turun saaristossa (Russian Fortification Works on Åland and Turku Archipelago).

8 RGAVMF, fond 418, opis' 1, delo 272 o postroike porta-baza im. Petra Velikago v Revele i o sozdanii Revel-Porkalandskoi ukreplennoi pozitsii v sviazi s programmii usilenogo sudostroeniia na 1912-1916 gg.



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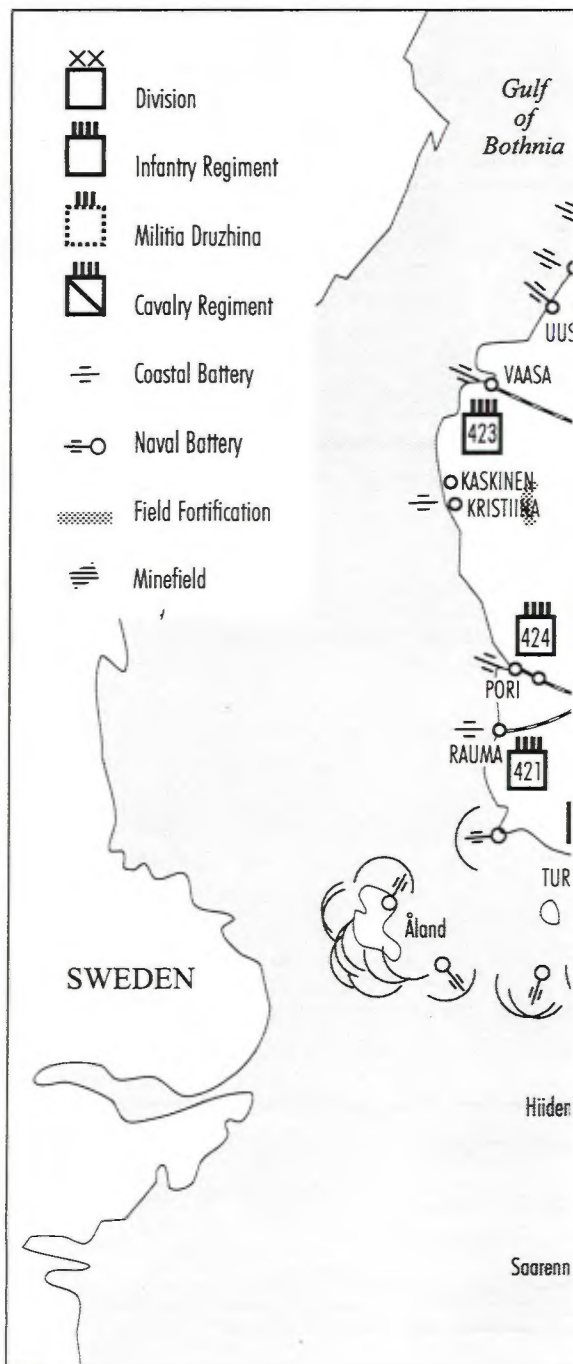
Russian warships in the Helsinki naval base in the winter of 1916-17; torpedo-boats in the foreground, auxiliaries behind them, an armoured cruiser in the right background.
Photo: Sotamuseo 1295 N 86.

beyond the range of the enemy's ship guns. In all twenty-four guns of 10"-11" were positioned in batteries of four, and twenty-four guns of 6" as well as numerous 57mm batteries erected against eventual raids by light enemy ships, with a couple of 75mm anti-aircraft guns. Permanent positions were constructed also for the landward defence of Helsinki-Sveaborg, first rather close to the built-up area and then, from 1915 onwards, further to the interior. The fortress area covered Santahamina (Sandhamn) and Lauttasaari (Drumsö) on flanks and the interior line of defence ran from Huopalahti (Hopla) to Mellunkylä. The enlarged fortress 'esplanade' (where a state of siege could have been declared when necessary) consisted of the parishes of Espoo (Esbo), the Helsinki rural district, and Sipoo (Sibbo).⁹

⁹ A Russian map without title or date in: Sota-arkisto, T 19168/5, Juuso Mannisen kokoelma. Talvio, 'Viaporin linnoitus ja sen tykistö vuosisadan vaihteesta vallankumoukseen' is a detailed but incoherent text; the English summary is useful, though: The Sveaborg Fortress from the Turn of the Century to the Revolution.

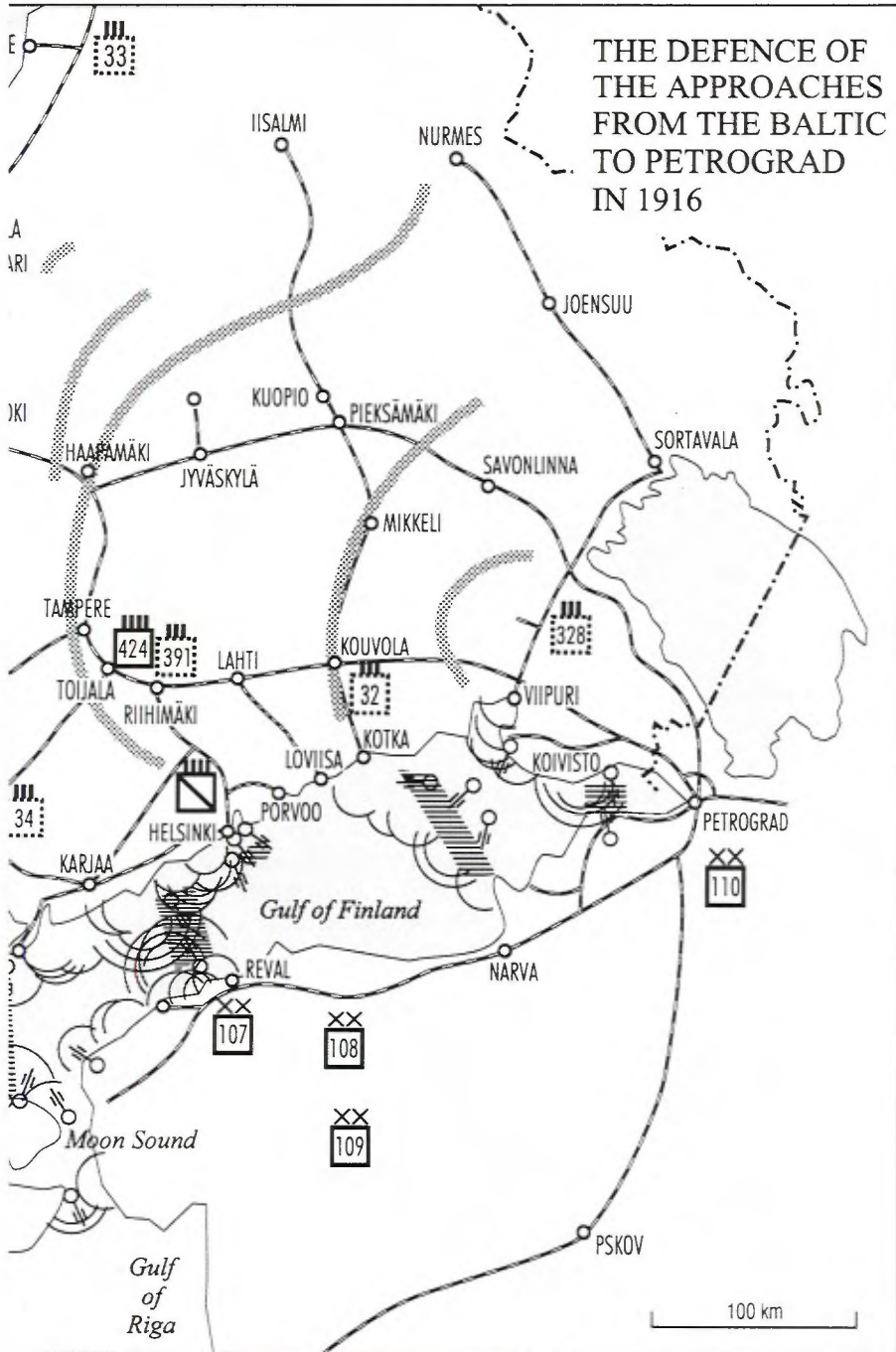
The Defence of St Petersburg in 1914-1917

After the disappearance of the Russian Navy in the Far East, Kronstadt and the flanking forts Ino and Krasnaia Gorka formed the defence of St Petersburg. In 1909 fortification work was started to close the narrow passage to the Gulf of Finland between Porkkala and Nargen with coastal batteries and minefields and with flanking positions at the Moon Sound and the archipelago of Turku-Åland. The work continued through the war years to the summer of 1917. A new navy was to be built and slowly took form; it was to be based at Reval, but the base was not completed before the Russian revolution, and Sveaborg served as a provisional naval base, its fortifications modernized and landward positions prepared. Rear positions were prepared on the Narva-Suursaari-Kotka line. The army was to deny access to the enemy from the Gulf of Bothnia towards St Petersburg, with the foremost defences on the coast, and the main position on the western edge of the lake district, and rear positions stretching from Kotka towards the north and from Viipuri to the north of the Ladoga Lake.

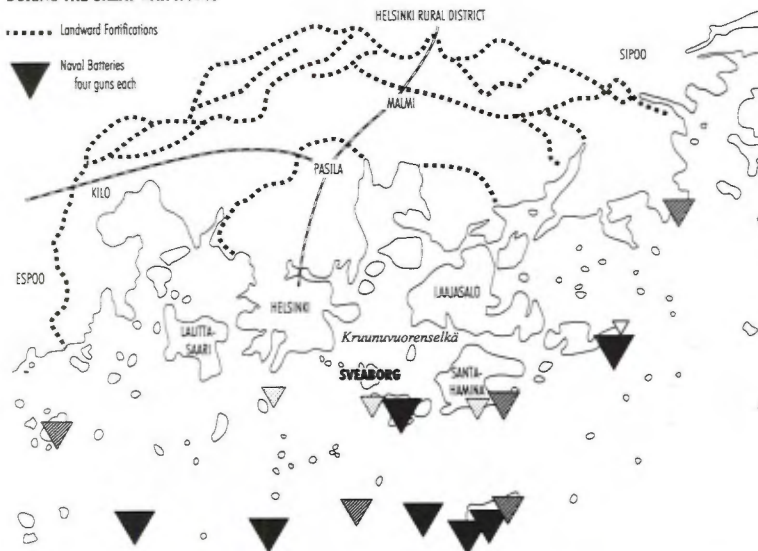


THE DEFENCE OF THE APPROACHES FROM THE BALTIC TO PETROGRAD IN 1916

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THE SVEABORG FORTRESS DURING THE GREAT WAR 1914-18



[Defence works of Sveaborg-Helsinki 1914-1917

To protect the anchorage of the navy on the Kruunuvuorenselkä, Sveaborg was strengthened with modern forward batteries on the cliffs in the Gulf of Finland, and with field fortifications on the landward front of the city, first a close ring in 1914 and then the large zone of works shown in the map.

Reval was also fortified on its southern land side. Kronstadt had been strengthened from 1909 onwards, its defences consisting in the end of two 13" and sixteen 12" guns as well as a couple of hundred guns between 9" and 6" plus one hundred smaller guns on the island and on the coasts close by at Ino and Krasnaia Gorka.¹⁰ The commandants of the fortresses were under the commander of the Baltic fleet, as was the army forces commander of the landward fronts of the fortresses, who held a position equal to an army corps commander.¹¹ The Baltic fleet, in turn, was subordinated to the VIth

10 RGAVMF, fond 418, opis' 1, delo 256 o primorskikh krepostiakh Baltiiskogo moria i razbor zapadnoi flotili shernoj pozitsii 30. I 1910-January 1911.

11 RGAVMF, fond 418, opis' 1, delo 356 o formirovanii chastei garnizona morskoi kreposti Petra Velikago i utverzhdenii ee shtatov 12. VIII 1914-25. VIII 1916.

Army, the staff of which was in St Petersburg and which was responsible for the defence of the Imperial capital and the landward and seaward approaches to it. Viipuri was an army fortress under the 42th Army Corps, but had also seaward batteries equipped with 6", 9" and 10" guns.¹²

State of war declared in Finland

Martial law was declared in Finland because the Grand Duchy belonged to the broad zone in the western part of the Empire which was put under military administration.¹³ Governor-General Seyn started working under the command of the VIth Army staff in St Petersburg and later under the staff of the Northern Front, although he seems to have maintained contact also with the Council of Ministers. Military censorship was established, travelling was controlled, meetings forbidden, and workers' associations paralysed. The Finns did not attempt a general strike and the *Voima* did not exist, which may have been a surprise to those authorities who still believed in the gendarme reports of the imminence of Finnish rebellion. It seems that at least Seyn and the military authorities in Finland saw no necessity for the measures planned for the reconquest of the country or for the extraordinary plans for taking over the Finnish administration by Russian officials. Instead of hundreds of suspects, only a few of the most recalcitrant leaders of the passive or Constitutional opposition were arrested, among them Pehr Evind Svinhufvud, the future Prime Minister and later President of the Finnish Republic. He was sent to a comfortable exile in Siberia.

The mobilization of the 22nd Army Corps was carried out according to plans, and no problems were caused by Finns. On the contrary, the army corps had reason to thank the population of Helsinki for their friendly treatment of the mobilizing detachments, and the Finnish railways for their zeal and punctual functioning without any hitch or mishap during the hectic days of mobilization.¹⁴

The army corps was then concentrated according to the previous

12 Arimo, *Suomen linnoittamisen historia 1918–1993*. (The History of Fortifications in Finland in 1918–93).

13 Graf, "Military Rule Behind the Russian Front 1914–1917".

14 Commander of the 22nd Army Corps to Seyn 17. VII 1914, KKK 1914, I department, war delo no. 3–5, National Archives of Finland.

plans, one brigade in western Uusimaa (Nyland), another in the region of Hamina-Viipuri, and two on the Karelian Isthmus.¹⁵

The idea was that the corps could fight off a big enemy landing at Koivisto or delay a smaller landing in the south-west of Finland. When it was seen that no invasion was coming from the sea, the 22nd Army Corps was transferred to the main front.¹⁶

In case the enemy should unexpectedly invade Finland, for a while the 84th Division stood ready in Viipuri and Koivisto, the 50th was in the Valkeasaari (Beloostrov) region prepared to defend the approaches to St Petersburg, and if necessary the 74th could have been sent to help the 84th.¹⁷ These divisions were apparently reserve detachments in process of mobilization in the St Petersburg military district, intended for Finland only in case of an emergency, but essentially destined for the main front. As early as in August 1914, the barracks in Finland started to be occupied by *opolchenie*, i.e. militia or replacement troops for training the repeated new levies of conscripts from Russia, or by resting and recuperating troops from the front; their organization in January 1915 will be described later in this book.

15 Rauanheimo, "Venäläiset joukot Suomessa maailmansodan 1914-1918 aikana; niiden yleisryhmytykset ja toimintasuunnitelmat" (Russian Troops in Finland during the First World War, their Formation and Operational Plans). Rauanheimo's work is based on the J. Manninen collection in the Military Archives of Finland.

16 In August–September the 22nd army corps was sent to the IXth Army on the South-Western Front and took part in battles in Galitsia and the Chénstokhovo-Cracow operation. In October–December 1914 the corps belonged to the Xth Army on the North-Western Front and took part in the operations in East Prussia. In the beginning of 1915, the corps was again transferred, to the VIIIth Army on the South-Western Front, in April–December 1915 it fought as part of the XIth Army and took part in the Peremyshl battle, and in 1916–1917 it took part in the summer attacks of the VIIth Army on the South-Western Front under Brusilov. At some time during the war the rifle brigades were transformed into divisions and more *Finliandskie* rifle regiments were established which had never seen the country after which they were named. The corps was dissolved in 1918. RGVIA, fond 2222, Shtab 22go armeiskago korpusa, introduction to the catalogue or opis'.

17 Nastavlenie No 2 voiskam VI-i armii, raspolozhennym v Petrograde i blizhaishikh okrestnostiax, dlia deistvii protiv dessanta na Finliandskom poberezh'e. Sotahistoriallinen toimisto, J. Mannisen keräämiä tietoja Venäjän sotavoimista Suomessa vv. 1808-1918, Sota-arkisto T 19168/5, Finnish Military Archives.

Finland in the war economy of Russia

The importance of Finland for Russia in the Great War was, first of all, that the country, tightly administered by the Russians, secured Petrograd from the North-West, as Finland had always done since 1809. But, in the absence of enemy activity, it was soon found that this border country also had an economic importance for the Imperial war effort, an aspect which had never been considered in the pre-war military plans.

The payment of a tribute instead of personal military service laid down in the law of 1912 continued during the war years. At first, it was expected to cause difficulties, because customs revenues were radically decreased when trade over the Baltic Sea ceased, and savings deposited in German bonds were beyond reach. Seyn proposed the seizure of private German and Austrian property in Finland instead, but the Council of Ministers was reluctant to make private enemy citizens pay for the faults of their governments, regarding such a form of revenge as beneath the dignity of the Empire. Resorting to government loans from the Bank of Finland was also regarded as improper, because it would have increased the amount of paper money in circulation.¹⁸ In 1914 the war had not yet abolished all decency.

However, the Finnish economy soon recovered from the first shock of the war, and fifteen million marks for 1914 were paid without difficulties. From the tribute for 1915, the Senate would have liked to deduct the price of the Finnish barracks given over to the Russian army, but the old debt was left to be discussed after the war, and the Senate had to pay sixteen millions, and also paid the seventeen millions for 1916 without further objections.¹⁹

The Imperial treasury demanded payment, too, from the Finnish government for the gendarme corps working in Finland, in all more than one million roubles for the years since Bobrikov's time. The Senate responded by saying that the Emperor, in 1905, had annulled all Bobrikov's orders, the establishment of the Finnish gendarme

18 Goremykin to Seyn 10. VIII 1914; Minister of Finance Barck to Seyn 17. I 1915; *Osobyi zhurnal Soveta Ministrov* 10. III 1915. KKK 1914, II department, delo 85, National Archives of Finland.

19 Senate to Seyn 25. V 1915 and the consequent correspondence, KKK 1915, II department, delo 101; *O vznose v Gel'singforskoie kaznacheistvo 17,000,000 marok vzamen otbyvaniia finliandskimi grazhdanami lichnoi voinskoi povinnosti*. KKK 1916, II department, delo 80, National Archives of Finland.

detachment included, and in any case no money could be paid on the strength of a ministerial order only; for Finnish questions with an Imperial interest, there existed the legal procedure decreed in 1910.

The Emperor had decided that the Finnish Diet was not to be convened during the war because of the agitation the uncensored speeches might cause, though elections were to be held in 1916, as decreed in 1906 for three-year periods (if not dissolved prematurely). Thus the procedure for Imperial legislation was unworkable during the war because no statement could be requested from the Diet, as decreed in 1910.

In the end, the Senate won this battle; the Ministry of War accepted the view that the increased number of gendarme officials in the country was a wartime matter and that they could thus be paid from the extraordinary war funds.²⁰

The Russified Senate of Finland, chaired by Mikhail Borovitinov, Seyn's former chief of chancery, thus defended Finnish autonomy against the Imperial demands so vigorously that the Senate seemed separatist to the chauvinist circles in Russia.²¹ The Senate was supported by Seyn, who was responsible for the smooth running of affairs in the country. Of course, this separatism was not due to any love of Finnish autonomy, but to the necessity of continuing the administration of the border country with the least possible disturbance during the war.

The Finnish economy soon recovered from the initial paralysis of the country's exports, because the Russian army bought everything and anything Finland was able to produce, and feeding Petrograd was a lucrative affair. Unemployed men found employment in the construction of fortifications, in transporting war materials from the Norwegian border to the railhead in northern Finland, and several thousand Finns were hired for the construction of the railway in Russian Karelia from Petrograd to *Romanov na Murmane* (in 1917 renamed Murmansk).

The Diet of 1913 had made the usual three-year budget for 1913–15, and since the Diet was not convened, no budget existed for 1916. But the ancient Swedish constitution of 1772 and 1789 made

20 Discussion on the payment for the gendarme corps KKK 1915, II department, delo 21–26, National Archives of Finland.

21 Torvinen, "Borovitinov – kahden kansan syntipukki" (A Scapegoat of Two Nations).

it legally possible to order by royal decree temporary taxes during the state of war, for example on capital, on official documents, on entertainment, and on wartime profits. The government income grew accordingly, from 95 million marks in 1914 to 108 millions in 1915 and 127 millions in 1916,²² which was sufficient for the everyday working of the administration plus the payment of the military tribute to the Imperial Treasury.

The Russian Government thought that Finland should pay more. The war turned out to be much more expensive than had ever been believed, and Finland, whose percentage of the imperial population was 1.8%, could and should, in the opinion of the Russian Government, pay at least 200,000,000 marks immediately, because 1.8% of Russia's war expenditure undoubtedly surpassed 200,000,000 roubles, three times the sum now demanded.

Again the Senate proved reluctant. It explained that the cost of the war could only be counted after it was ended, and peacetime payments necessitated legislation according to the procedure of 1910. The defeated enemy could also be made to pay reparations, while, on the other hand, it was not certain at all that Finland would be spared destruction, if the expected enemy landing should take place some day.

Aide-de-camp General Ivanov in the *Stavka*, or Imperial Headquarters, complained in November 1916: "To date the Finns have not carried any wartime burden, on the contrary, safe from all disasters, they are getting rich at our expense; work for the army and military orders are bringing them money..."²³

The Imperial government did not endorse the proposal to make Germany pay for Finland, nor did they expect the border country to be destroyed so badly that this would cover its debt to Russia. The Minister of Finance Barck explained on 18 February/3 March 1917

22 Senate 7. III and Seyn to Minister State Secretary 4/17. III 1916; O sostoianii statnago fonda v 1915 i 1916 gg. KKK 1916, II department, delo 34, National Archives of Finland; for a short review of the Russo-Finnish trade during the war years, see: J.M. Bobovich & V.I. Bovykin, *Venäjän ja Suomen väliset taloudelliset suhteet ja ensimmäinen maailmansota*; and: Bobovich, *Russko-finliandskie ekonomicheskie otnosheniia nakanune velikoi oktiabrskoi sotsialisticheskoi revoliutsii (epokha imperializma)*.

23 *Pamiatnaia zapiska o mestnom naselenii Finliandii*, gen.ad. Ivanov, *Stavka* 23. IX 1916. VSV (Office of the Minister State Secretary) Hc 7, National Archives of Finland.

that the 200,000,000 marks were badly needed for paying for the fortification works and army orders in Finland. "I remain awaiting a positive reply..."²⁴

Barck did not need to wait many days, for soon the whole Tsarist government was overturned. In fact, however, Finland unintentionally contributed to the financing of Russia's war effort, because her exports to Russia were paid in roubles, which the Bank of Finland had to buy from the exporters with marks; and the Bank also bought Russian war bonds. In the end, as the Empire disappeared, the Bank of Finland owned at least ninety-nine million of worthless rouble notes and bonds, and consequently notes of more than two hundred million marks were in circulation which only had a paper value.

Few Finns fought in Russia's war, but economic and political ties bound the border country to the Empire. Increased economic activity brought wealth for many Finns, but deprivations for others. Speculators flourished, agriculture and industry and their workers were fully employed, while people with a fixed salary, pay or interest suffered from the slowly increasing inflation.²⁵

Finns in Russian service

Finnish-born officers in the Russian army, who had given their military oath to the Emperor, continued serving without hesitation, as did the Baltic Germans and other officers of non-Russian birth. There were even complaints among Russian soldiers that the high whole command was in German hands – Sveaborg was commanded by Lieutenant General Bauer, the Baltic fleet by von Essen, the VI Army by General van der Vliet, and highest of all, was Empress Alix of Hesse.²⁶

24 Keisarillisen Suomen Senaatin lausunto Raha-asiaiministerin lakiehdotuksesta, joka koskee Suomen osanottoa niiden ylimääräisten menojen korvaamiseksi, joita sota on aiheuttanut valtakunnanrahastolle; Osobyi zhurnal Soveta Ministrov po voprosu o vypuske finliandskoiu kaznoi u zaimov na pokrytie chasti padaiushchikh na doliu Finliandii chrezvychainykh rashodov, vyzvannykh nastoiashcheiu voinoiu, and consequent discussion 1915-1917: KKK 1914, II department, delo 94 II; KKK 1916, II department, delo 48; the last letter of Barck from 18. II 1917: KKK 1914 II department, delo 94 II, National Archives of Finland.

25 This dependence of Finland from the Russian development was pointed out to me by my colleague Pertti Haapala.

26 Egorov, *Ot monarkhii...* p. 117.

In fact, the ethnic differences had no real importance; at least among the officers, only professional competence was considered.²⁷ The soldiers' suspicion of a lack of patriotism in the leadership was without any foundation. The list of noble family names only reflected the narrow social basis from which the high command was recruited. Instead of accusations of treason, a suspicion about lack of competence or adequate training would have been more reasonable.

The outbreak of the Great War gave rise everywhere to a popular feeling of chauvinism, and the wave of all-Imperial patriotism touched even the Finns. There was some discussion in private circles about re-establishing a Finnish army of one or two divisions to participate in the defence of the Empire. These discussions came to nothing, but a few hundred volunteers entered the Russian army in the autumn of 1914. In 1915 and 1916 the number of volunteers fell to a few only.²⁸

Finnish businessmen soon realized that the war had created for them a hugely profitable market in Russia. As an expression of sympathy, industrialists equipped an ambulance or field hospital, and several hundred hospital beds were set up in Finland for wounded soldiers.²⁹ For example, the Helsinki *Seurahuone* or assembly rooms and restaurant, were transformed into a military hospital, where "Russian Red Cross sisters, their faces and lips heavily painted, peeped from the windows..."³⁰

This sympathy may have been surprising to those Russians who had believed in the existence of the *Voima*. Seyn guessed that the idea behind these proposals was the hope that the Imperial government would desist from their unificatory policy in Finland if the country was proved loyal,³¹ as had happened in 1812, 1830, 1854–55, 1863 and 1875–78.³² That was why the Governor-General tried to check the volunteer movement.

27 Denikine, *La décomposition de l'armée et du pouvoir, février-septembre 1917*, p. 243.

28 Seyn to the Minister of the Interior 16. XI 1916, KKK 1917, I department, delo 2_32; Otchety o politicheskoy sostoianii raznykh gubernii. KKK Hd 105, n:o 4, National Archives of Finland.

29 KKK 1917, II department, delo 21_10, perepiska 1, National Archives of Finland.

30 Leppänen, *Elämäni teatteria*, p. 42. (The Memoirs of L.).

31 So, at least, believed Carl Enckell, *Poliittiset muistelmani*, vol. I, p. 54 (Political Memoirs).

32 So explained a gendarme official to an Old Finn, Eino Voionmaa, *Tsaarivallan suojeleusaston toimintaa Suomessa*, p. 162 (The Reminiscences of V. about his Arrest by the Okhrana).

Finnish hopes were soon shattered by the publication of a catalogue of legislative projects for strengthening Imperial governmental authority in Finland, for securing the Imperial defence in the country, and for political and economic integration with the other parts of the Empire. The Finns called the list the Great Programme of Russification.³³ It was, in fact, only a committee protocol submitted to different government departments for their comment, but, of course, it reflected the unificatory intentions of the Imperial government.³⁴

The Poles had been given a promise of reunification and a degree of national existence signed by Nicholas Nicholaevich, the Supreme commander-in-chief. This promise had encouraged the Finnish hopes of a restoration of the autonomy of the Grand Duchy. In fact the two cases were not comparable, because the Finns could not have such immediate importance to military operations as the Poles did, a great nation with a tradition of rebellions and living in the battlefield, partly behind the enemy lines, partly in the rear of the Russian main armies. No reason existed for similar concessions to the Finns, a small nation with only a theoretical danger of a German or Swedish invasion to instigate the imaginary *Voima* to revolt.

However, no measures for Russification were taken, because maintaining order in the country for the duration of the war was of more urgent importance, although many ministers thought that some limits ought to have been set to Finnish impudence. In contrast, the Minister for Foreign Affairs Sazonov warned: "For God's sake, don't egg on General Seyn, leave the Finns in peace", in order not to provoke Sweden. Kokovtsov's successor Prime Minister Goremykin agreed: "We have difficulties enough without worrying about the Finns. May the Devil take them all. Let us see how this all ends. Until then let us not take up the Finnish question". It was decided to follow a benevolent policy in practice, but no promises were to be given to the Finns.³⁵

33 Minister State Secretary Markov to General Ianushkevich 3/16. XII 1914. VSV Fc 3, n:o 16, National Archives of Finland.

34 Rasila, "Vuoden 1914 venäläistämisesetuksen synty" (The Origins of the Decree on Russification). The programme had been made public even before the war, but the news of its definite confirmation caused the agitation in November.

35 Tiazhelye Dni, sekretnyia zasedaniia Soveta Ministrov 16 iulia – 2 sentiabria 1915 goda; sostavleno A.N. Iakhontovym, b. pomoshchnikom Upravliaiushchaia Delam Soveta Ministrov na osnovanii ego zapisei v zasedaniakh po sekretnym voprosam. *Arkhiv Russkoi Revoliutsii* XVIII, Berlin 1926, pp. 35, 110–12.

Why didn't the Germans attack?

The German High Seas fleet stayed in its North Sea anchorages and was never able to break the distant blockade of the Royal Navy. On the other hand, the British fleet did not attempt to break through into the Baltic. Of course, the Germans could never be certain of this and they had to watch the southern mouth of the Belts as well as the Sound constantly. This was the task of the *Siegfrieds*, the old coastal armoured ships of the German Baltic fleet, based on Kiel. Forgetting their pre-war carefree attitude towards eventual raids on their Baltic coast, German staffs also scratched together coastal defence troops to guard the long open beaches, in spite of the lack of manpower for the land fronts and war industries.³⁶

Only a minimal force was left for the active Baltic flotilla and not much activity could be expected of it. The Commander-in-Chief of the Baltic fleet, Prince Henry of Prussia, kept asking for reinforcements from the North Sea, where, in his opinion, that naval war only meant laying anchored in the river estuaries. For most of the time, his demands were left unheeded.³⁷

In August 1914, Prince Henry detached his light cruisers and a few torpedo boats to Danzig. The German flag was shown on the Swedish coast, a few mines were dropped at the mouth of the Gulf of Finland, and the cruiser *Magdeburg* was lost, with her code book which the Russians salvaged and gave to the British, who were thus able to read all German wireless communications. The *U 26* succeeded in sinking the *Pallada*, a Russian armoured cruiser, but this success was balanced by the loss of the armoured cruiser *Friedrich Karl* on mines which the Russians had laid off Memel. In January 1915, an operation against Utö was attempted but given up when the light cruisers *Augsburg* and *Gazelle* were badly damaged by Russian mines.

The truth was that it was the distant Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow that kept the German fleets away from the Finnish coasts. On the other hand, the German High Seas Fleet remained in being and, in

36 Adm. Stab 15. IX 1914. BA-MA RM 5/v 4046, Ostsee, Verschiedenes 17. VIII 1914-5. III 1918.

37 *Der Krieg in der Ostsee*, vols. I- III, the official history, tells the detailed story of German operations. Forstner, *Krieg in der Ostsee*, tells much about of the year 1914, obviously from the author's own experience. Contemporary official correspondence: BA-MA RM 57v 3982, Operationsangelegenheiten Ostsee 1. I 1915-31. VIII 1915 (contains papers from 1914 as well).

fact, blockaded the Russians in the Gulf of Finland, the minelaying raids excepted.

Naval war of attrition

Admiral von Essen died in the spring of 1915 and was succeeded by Admiral V.A. Kanin. Work on the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great continued, and the Gulf of Finland was even more tightly closed. The dreadnoughts were always kept in the Gulf of Finland, but the naval defence was cautiously pushed forward; the old *Slava* was transferred to the Gulf of Riga, based in the Moon Sound, accompanied by a couple of gunboats, of which the *Khrabryi* is worth mentioning.³⁸ The British sent five submarines of the E class to the Baltic through the Sound, and small submarines of the C class were sent to Archangel and from there by train to the Russian Baltic ports.³⁹

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In the spring of 1915, the Germans again formed a detached flotilla for the eastern waters of the Baltic, now under Admiral Hopmann. He proposed a bombardment of Libau by the armoured cruisers, or even by modern battleships if they could be borrowed from the North Sea, but the Admiralty Staff forbade 'these constant demands for reinforcements'. Thus Hopmann could only send the light cruiser *Strassburg* to look for Russian ships plying between Finland and Sweden, the converted railway ferry *Deutschland* to drop mines here and there, and a few torpedo boats to cruise in the direction of the Gulfs of Finland and Riga.

The great advance of the German army drove the Russians out of Poland in the spring and summer of 1915, and at the beginning of May the army group Lauenstein occupied Libau. Hopmann's cruisers supported the conquest by a bombardment, which was futile because the Russians had left the town in order to avoid being encircled there. During the summer, the German army conquered the whole of Courland.

Prince Henry wanted Libau for his base. It was one hundred miles

38 After the battles in the Gulf of Riga, the *Khrabryi* was withdrawn back to Helsinki and then to Kronstadt, where the ship was later called *Krasnoe Znamia*; during the Second World War the ship was sunk by Finnish motor torpedo boats at Suursaari in the Gulf of Finland, but raised by the Russians and after the armistice with Finland in 1944 was sent to Helsinki to remind Finns of the presence of the Allied Control Commission, though the Soviet army had not been able to conquer or occupy the country.

39 Wilson, *Baltic Assignment; British Submarines in Russia 1914-1919*.

closer than Danzig to the Gulf of Finland; from Libau any Russian attempt against the German coast could be prevented, and the navy could also contribute to the supply of the army on the Riga front. At first, the idea was that the harbour town would be given back after the war, on condition that the Russians did not rebuild their base there, but soon the navy wanted to keep it permanently; Libau was the first 'war aim' of the Baltic fleet. Hopmann was appointed *Seebefehlshaber Libau*, naval commander at Libau.

One of the *Siegfrieds* was positioned in Libau as a guardship. A counterattack by Russian armoured ships succeeded in sinking the minelayer *Albatross* and the British *E 9* torpedoed the *Prinz Adalbert*, which had steamed out to help the minelayer. Thereafter the Libau flotilla was reinforced by the *Brandenburg* and *Wörth*, of the oldest pre-dreadnought battleship class.

Then Prince Henry succeeded in borrowing a few big ships from the North Sea. Minesweepers cleared passages to the Gulf of Riga, airships and submarines secured the entry to the Gulf of Finland, the dreadnoughts *Posen* and *Nassau* kept watch for the *Slava*, and the armoured cruisers *Roon* and *Prinz Heinrich* bombarded Russian coastal batteries and damaged the gunboat *Sivuch*. Meanwhile, the battle-cruiser *von der Tann* and the light cruiser *Kolberg* bombarded the Utö fort and exchanged a few shots with the armoured cruiser *Makarov*. The cruiser *Bremen* was destroyed by a mine laid at Windau.

The German Baltic fleet believed that they had compelled the Russians to remain in defensive positions, but higher naval staffs criticized the aimless raid on the Gulf of Riga, which had been concluded or interrupted so hastily that the enemy could claim a victory.⁴⁰

It is true that the Russians feared for the security of Reval and reinforced their positions at Hiidenmaa (Dagö) and Russarö at the mouth of the Gulf of Finland with heavy guns and new minefields. The plans to extend the naval fortress to the western islets had been made before the German raid took place. In fact, the active Russian mine warfare in 1915 was quite a success if German losses are counted, even though the big ships continued swing passively at their anchorages in Helsinki.

The navigation season of 1916 saw renewed demands by Prince

40 Stegemann, "Die deutsche Marinepolitik 1916-1918", p. 125.

Henry and his admirals for dreadnoughts and battlecruisers plus torpedo boats, minesweepers and submarines, but they were allowed only one armoured ship to guard Kiel, and the new naval commander at Libau Admiral Langemak had to give up even the old *Siegfried* and was left without any heavy ships. The armoured cruisers lost on mines were not replaced, and even the remaining units were retired because the experience of 1914 and 1915 showed that they were too weak against mines and torpedoes. Their crews were transferred to submarines, mine flotillas and convoy escorts. The Baltic fleet was left with only the three light cruisers, the *Strassburg*, *Kolberg* and *Augsburg*.

The German Baltic admirals proposed the conquest of Saarenmaa (Ösel) and Hiidenmaa (Dagö) in order to be better able to confine the Russians to the Gulf of Finland, but the army would not detach any force from the Western front, where General Falkenhayn was expecting victory from his operations at Verdun. In the summer, the Brusilov offensive caused a critical situation in the south-eastern sector of the Eastern front, but in the north only the *Slava* and *Khrabryi* contributed to the battle by a bombardment of the German flank from the Gulf of Riga.

The undecided battle of Jutland in May 1916 only confirmed the *status quo* in the North Sea, where the strategy of mutual waiting and watching continued. It also confirmed the decision of Denmark and Norway to maintain their neutrality. For Russia it meant, together with the closure of the Black Sea Straits, that she remained practically isolated from the West. The aid which could be sent through Archangel and Vladivostok, with their long and weak railway lines, satisfied only a fraction of Russia's needs.

An attack by the British fleet on the Baltic was sometimes discussed, for example, when the Russian Admiral Schoultz, attached to the Grand Fleet, asked for such an operation.⁴¹ In 1905 Admiral Fisher had proposed 'copenhagening' the German fleet at Kiel, where a rumour of such plans was heard and caused a momentary panic; and instead of the Gallipoli attempt, in 1915, Fisher proposed a landing on the Pomeranian coast,⁴² and perhaps his white elephants, the

41 Schoultz, *Englannin suuri laivasto maailmansodassa; mukanaolleen muistiinpanoja*. (The Grand Fleet in the World War; Memoirs of a Participant), pp. 84–88, 143, 204, 602–03.

42 Kennedy, *The rise and fall of British naval mastery*, p. 304.

dreadnought-sized cruisers *Glorious* and *Furious*, which were unarmoured but equipped with heavy guns, were constructed with this operation in mind. But the idea was always deemed too dangerous.

Then, learning that many German battleships were out of service, being repaired or replenished after the battle of Jutland, Admiral Kanin decided to plan a landing on Courland, in the rear of the German army facing Riga. The *Tsesarevich* was ordered to join the *Slava* and the big dreadnoughts were transferred from Helsinki to the Lappohja (Lappvik) anchorage (close to Hanko) in case the High Seas fleet should intervene. But when the planners calculated that at least 55,000 men, 12,000 horses and 35,000 waggons were necessary for the operation, both generals and admirals were frightened at the scale of their plans. Kanin desisted from the attempt on the pretext that the Grand Fleet could not guarantee that the High Seas fleet would stay in the North Sea.

By this time, German torpedo boats of the North Sea fleet had carried out a successful raid in the Channel, and the Baltic fleet wanted similar laurels. Admiral Langemak ordered eleven torpedo boats to bombard Baltischport on 10 November 1916. No Russian ships were encountered and no serious destruction was caused to the target by the bombardment, but on the way back seven torpedo boats were lost in a Russian minefield. Langemak lost his command and Hopmann, after a campaign in Turkish waters, was brought back to Libau.

The numerous Russian submarines were unable to achieve much throughout these years because of mechanical defects and, probably, defective tactics and lack of decisive leadership. Their orders bound them to guard the mine defences of the Gulf of Finland and they never sighted a German warship, nor, to avoid provoking Sweden, were they allowed to disturb the German freighters which carried iron ore from the Gulf of Bothnia to Germany. But the few British submarines in the Baltic acted aggressively and caused the Germans work and worry out of all proportion. The damaged *Prinz Adalbert* had hardly been repaired when it was sunk by the *E 8*, killing 672 sailors. The *E 19* sank the *Undine*. In 1915 the submarines which fought the German transports were hampered by international regulations for limiting submarine war, but in 1916 the regulations were forgotten and the ore carriers were sunk without previous warning.

The German Baltic fleet had to organize convoys to secure for their war industry the vital ore import from Sweden. There were the usual difficulties: the merchantmen had not been used to naval discipline and the navy lacked escort ships so that fishing craft had to be armed

for the purpose. The ore ships were safe as long as they sailed inside the Swedish territorial waters but the passage across the southern Baltic Sea was dangerous. Russian minelayers also caused much anxiety to the German staffs and shipowners, who complained that the Russian mines threatened German domination of the Baltic sea.⁴³

On the German side, the *U 28* sank the Russian minelayer *Enisei*, and the *UC 4* mined the Russian passages where the minelayer *Ladoga* was sunk. Sometimes, German submarines tried to catch Russian ships in the Gulf of Bothnia. The British lost the *E 18* in May 1916.⁴⁴

Thus the pre-war expectation of a big-gun battle had to be abandoned. The war at the sea turned out to be a drawn-out campaign of mines and convoys, in the Baltic as well as in the North Sea and the Atlantic.

Motor torpedo boats were experimentally used in the narrow Irben strait between Courland and the Estonian islands, and the possibilities of Zeppelin attacks against the Russian fleet or Kronstadt, Helsinki and Reval were discussed. The first airship of the German Baltic fleet, the *PL 19*, had been shot down when trying to bomb Libau in 1915, but German reports stated that Mariehamn (Maarianhamina) in Åland was bombed in July 1916 with 700 kilos of bombs from four Zeppelins.⁴⁵ Aeroplanes proved ineffective; out of 44 German machines in Courland in 1916, 30 were lost, but only four of them in battle with the enemy.

The army front in Finland turned westwards

After the 22nd Army Corps had left Finland, in January 1915 the various *opolchenie*, i.e. replacement or militia, troops sent to the country were organized into a new 10th Militia Corps. It consisted of the 1st Militia Brigade of six *druzhiny*,⁴⁶ the 60th Militia Brigade of

43 Zentralverein Deutscher Rheder, Hamburg, den 12. Juni 1915. BA-MA RM 5/v 4046 Ostsee, Verschiedenes 17. VIII 1914–5. III 1918.

44 PRO ADM 137 2001, Part II, British naval losses.

45 "Les Zeppelins et la guerre", *l'Aérophile, revue technique & pratique des locomotions aériennes*, 17–18/1916, p. 263. I am obliged to Mr Olli Saloranta for the copy of the magazine.

46 1st Militia Brigade, Hämeenlinna
 – 1st Estonia *druzhina*, Lahti
 – 2nd Estonia *druzhina*, Riihimäki
 – 3rd Petrograd *druzhina*, Tampere
 – 4th Petrograd *druzhina*, Tampere
 – 5th Petrograd *druzhina*, Hämeenlinna
 – 6th Petrograd *druzhina*, Hämeenlinna

also six *druzhiny*,⁴⁷ and the 68th Militia Brigade of four *druzhiny*,⁴⁸ with additional cavalry, artillery and sapper detachments. In addition to the militia brigades, the 8th Orenburg Cossack Regiment of six sotnias and various rear detachments belonged to the corps.⁴⁹ To guard the coast of the Karelian Isthmus and of the Gulf of Bothnia, the First Petrograd Alexander III Border Guards Brigade of three foot and three mounted sotnias was formed in Petrograd and transferred to the coastal district divided into sectors and into small guard posts.⁵⁰ The

-
- 1st Militia Horse Sotnia, Hämeenlinna
 - 2nd Militia Light Battery, Riihimäki
 - 3rd Battery, Hämeenlinna
 - 50th militia sapper half-company, Pitäjänmäki (Sockenbacka)
 - 47 60th militia brigade, Helsinki
 - 323rd Novgorod *druzhina*, Helsinki
 - 324th Novgorod *druzhina*, Turku
 - 336th Olonets *druzhina*, Hanko
 - 337th Olonets *druzhina*, Tammisaari
 - 338th Olonets *druzhina*, Tammisaari
 - 339th Petrograd *druzhina*, Helsinki
 - 1st Light Battery, Tammisaari
 - 48th sapper half-company, Malmi.

Druzhina originally meant the military retinue of medieval Russian princes and probably its adoption reflects an attempt to heighten patriotic feeling among the recruits.
 - 48 68th Militia Brigade, Helsinki
 - 307th Petrograd *druzhina*, Kouvola
 - 310th Petrograd *druzhina*, Toijala
 - 319th Novgorod *druzhina*, Helsinki
 - 340th Petrograd *druzhina*, Viipuri
 - 49 militia training detachment, Hämeenlinna
 militia transport detachment, Hämeenlinna
 militia mobile field hospital
 militia military-sanitary transport
 militia sanitary-hygienic detachment
 militia disinfection detachment
 militia mobile field hospital no. 4
 militia transport detachment no. 4
 militia training detachment no. 4
 Finland lines of communication department (*etapnoe upravlenie*), Viipuri
 - 1st rear area, Viipuri
 - 2nd rear area, Kouvola
 - 1st detached lines of communication company, Uusikirkko
 - 2nd detached lines of communication company, Viipuri
 Finnish military transport department, Helsinki (*upravlenie zavedyvaiushchii peredvizheniem voisk finliandskago raiona*)
 - 50 1st Petrograd Alexander III Boarder Guards Brigade,
 - 1st sector, Tornio
 - 2nd sector, Oulu

Sveaborg⁵¹ and Viipuri fortresses⁵² with their garrisons and with an additional militia brigade at each, were at this time subordinated directly to the VIth Army staff. Later, Sveaborg was subordinated to the Baltic fleet and Viipuri to the army corps in Finland. I have not found any information as to the number of soldiers,⁵³ only lists of the

-
- 3rd sector, Vaasa
 - 4th sector, Pori
 - 5th sector, Turku
 - 6th sector, Viipuri-Valkeasaari (Beloostrov).

- 51 Sveaborg fortress
- fortress artillery
 - fortress mine battalion
 - fortress aviation detachment
 - fortress gendarme detachment
 - fortress sanitary department
 - 1st temporary hospital
 - 2nd temporary hospital
 - Sveaborg local *lasaret* (hospital)
 - fortress cattle
 - intendent department
 - engineer department
 - 3rd detached sapper company, Malmi

- 62nd Militia Brigade
- 322nd Novgorod *druzhina*, Sveaborg
 - 329th Estonia *druzhina*, Sveaborg
 - 332nd Tver *druzhina*, Sveaborg
 - 333rd Tver *druzhina*, Helsinki
 - 351st Livonia *druzhina*, Viipuri

- 52 Viipuri fortress
- fortress artillery (10 companies)
 - engineer department
 - mine company
 - wireless station
 - gendarme detachment
 - local military hospital
 - fortress temporary hospital
 - intendent's department
 - provisions magazine
 - fortress cattle
 - veterinary hospital

69. militia brigade
- 311th Petrograd *druzhina*, Viipuri
 - 315th Petrograd *druzhina*, Viipuri
 - 318th Novgorod *druzhina*, Viipuri
 - 321st Novgorod *druzhina*, Viipuri
 - 346th Novgorod *druzhina*, Viipuri
 - 347th Novgorod *druzhina*, Viipuri

- 53 There is an exception: RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 2, delo 5 shtaba sukhoputnykh voisk podchinennykh upravliaiushcheiu Baltiiskom flotom, p. 119, Svedenie o

various formations and detachments.⁵⁴

With the advance of the Germans into Poland and Lithuania in the spring of 1915, Finland also seemed to be threatened again. It was felt that the border country could not be left to be defended only by militia troops of minimal fighting value. The militia corps staff, with additional officers from the *druzhiny*, was transformed into a regular 42th Army Corps staff in May-June 1915, at first located in Helsinki, but later transferred to Tampere in August.

The militia *druzhiny* were transformed into regular battalions which were formed into regiments, and they in turn into infantry divisions, so that the 42nd Corps consisted of the 106th Infantry Division and the 107th Infantry Division, with the 8th Orenburg Cossack Regiment, as well as many rear detachments, a few of which retained the indication 'militia' in their names.

The 106th Division was first positioned in the region of Lahti–Riihimäki–Hämeenlinna–Tampere–Pori, and it consisted of four infantry regiments and three artillery batteries.⁵⁵ The 107th Division was formed in the south-west of Finland and in Helsinki–Sveaborg with its four regiments and three artillery batteries.⁵⁶ The artillery

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sostoianie chinov i loshadei garnizona Sveaborgskoi kreposti 15. IX 1915. In September 1915 there were 317 officers, 93 officials, 64 doctors, 12,631 soldiers 'of the line' and 1,541 men detached to other tasks, and only 8 horses in Sveaborg.

54 All the preceding lists included in: RGAVMF, fond 1347, opis' 1, delo 75, boevoe raspisanie chastei VI armii, o rashodakh po sodержaniu voisk, upravlenii i uchrezhdenii i pr.; boevoe raspisanie 30. I 1915.

55 The 106th Division consisted of:

- the 421st *Tsarskosel'skii* Infantry Regiment, formed of the 1st and 2nd *druzhiny*, the staff and one battalion at Peipohja, one at Rauma and Pori, one at Tampere;
- the 422nd *Kolpinskii* Regiment, formed of the 5th and 6th *druzhiny*, the staff and one battalion at Hämeenlinna, two battalions at Riihimäki;
- the 423rd *Luzhskii* Regiment, formed of the 3rd and 4th *druzhiny*, the staff and two battalions at Tampere, one battalion at Vaasa;
- the 424th *Chudskii* Regiment, formed of the 307th, 310th and 340th *druzhiny*, the staff and two battalions at Lahti, one battalion at Koria;
- the artillery batteries, the 1st at Rauma, the 2nd at Pori, the 3rd at Hämeenlinna.

In July 1915 the 41st Detached Sapper Battalion was added to the strength of the 106th Division, in September 1916 a fourth battalion was added to each of the regiments, in December 1916 the 120th Artillery Battalion joined the division. The staff was moved to Pori in March 1916 and from there to Hämeenlinna in May 1916, and to Tampere in December 1916.

RGVIA, fond 2421, opis' 1, introduction to the catalogue or opis'.

56 The 107th division consisted of:

- the 425th *Kargopol'skii* Regiment, formed of the 323th, 337th, 339th *druzhiny*, the staff in Helsinki with two battalions, one battalion on the railway

stores of both divisions were at Lappeenranta, the forward supply stores were positioned at Riihimäki and temporary mobile supply detachments were loaded in railway waggons. The 8th Orenburg Cossack Regiment was at Tuusula and Kerava, the 1st Militia sotnia at Hämeenlinna, the 48th and 50th Militia sapper half-companies in the Helsinki region.

Together with the 43rd Army Corps in the Baltic provinces, the 42nd belonged to the VIth Army, whose staff was in Petrograd. The 43rd Corps consisted of the 108th and the 109th Divisions in Estonia and the 110th in Petrograd.⁵⁷ In December, 1916 the VIth Army staff was transferred to lead troops on the Rumanian Front, and its troops in the north were divided between the XIIth Army and the detached 42nd Army Corps. The detached corps commander had the authority of an army commander under the Northern Front commander-in-chief. The area of the 42nd Army Corps then covered almost all Finland, including the Viipuri fortress and for a while even Kronstadt, but with the exception of the southern coast, where the Sveaborg fortress, the main base of warships, was subordinated to the Baltic fleet commander, as was also the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great with one of its batteries at Porkkala and its Turku-Åland Archipelago Position.⁵⁸

The Viipuri fortress garrison consisted of fortress artillery staff and

Helsinki-Turku; September 1915 transferred to the garrison of the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great;

– the 426th *Rovenskii* Regiment, formed of the 324th, 336th, 351st *druzhiny*, the staff and two battalions at Tammisaari, one in Turku; September 1915 transferred to the garrison of the Naval Fortress Peter the Great;

– the 427th *Zibetskii* Regiment, formed of the 330th, 333rd, 351st *druzhiny*, the staff and two battalions in Helsinki, one battalion at Sveaborg;

– the 428th *Staritskii* Regiment, formed of the 322nd, 329th, 332nd *druzhiny*, in Sveaborg;

– the artillery batteries, the 1st at Tammisaari, the 2nd at Riihimäki, the 3rd in Turku.

In February 1916, the 107th Division was divided in two, and the halves were built up into full divisions, with the new 116th Division of the 425th and the 427th as well as of two new regiments for the garrison of the Naval fortress, while the two new regiments of the 107th Division the 426th *Pudozhskii* and the 428th *Lodeinopoleinyi* Regiments at first garrisoned Sveaborg, but in July 1916 the Pudozians were transferred to the Moon Sound, and the Lodeinopolians garrisoned Helsinki. RGVA, fond 2422, opis' 1, introduction to the catalogue.

57 The 440th Regiment of the 110th Division, formed of the 555th, 573rd and 722nd *druzhiny*, was temporarily positioned in Viipuri.

58 RGVA, fond 2262, shtab 42go armeiskago korpusa, introduction to the catalogue or opis'.

a fortress artillery battalion and the 10th company of the Sveaborg fortress artillery, fortress engineer staff and one mine company, and a wireless telegraph station plus a gendarme detachment. This catalogue gives a picture of the branches of arms at the Viipuri garrison, but not their strength in numbers. In Viipuri there were also the Finland lines of communication staff, which organized the transport of men to and from Finland, under the military communications chief.⁵⁹

The Sveaborg fortress garrison consisted of its temporarily attached infantry detachments from the 107th Division as stated above, and of its fortress artillery staff and fortress artillery regiment, gendarme detachment, military telegraph, hospitals and magazines, and the 3rd detached sapper company.

There was also a *vozdukhoplavatel'nyi* or aviation company in the catalogue of the Sveaborg garrison; part of the force operated in the area of the Naval Fortress.⁶⁰ In a Finnish history book the air force was identified as the 2nd Aeroplane Brigade of two detachments, of which the 4th was stationed on Åland and the 5th in Turku, with bases or air stations in Helsinki, at Jungfrusund, Lappohja and Jurmo. The detachments had the nominal strength of nineteen aircraft each, for naval reconnoitring, of Stetinin M-9 class flying boats and Farman float planes. The first brigade may have been on the Estonian coast.⁶¹

The differences occurring in the fortress garrisons between January and the summer of 1915 indicate the frequent moves of various detachments, which cannot here be followed in details.

The construction work of the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great was carried on under the command of its Chief Constructor. As soon as any sector or part was completed, it was taken over by the fortress commander, who was subordinate to the commander of the Baltic fleet, who in turn obeyed the VIth Army commander and the Northern Front commander-in-chief.

As shown by the positions of the 42nd Army Corps, the idea of the pre-war plans of withdrawing to the line of Kymijoki was

59 For a detailed list, see The Appendix.

60 Staff, observation posts, train, stores and fuel depots. Amirkhanov, *Morskaja krepost' Imperatora Petra Velikago*, p. 77.

61 Bremer, *Ilmavoimien osallistuminen Suomen vapaussotaan v. 1918*, pp. 8-11. (The Participation of Air Forces in the Finnish War of Liberation). Bremer does not identify his sources.

abandoned as no enemy appeared on the Finnish coasts. Even before it was definitely seen that the Germans were not coming to Finland in 1915, parts of the 107th Division were transferred to Estonia in the summer, because of the catastrophe in Poland, the loss of Courland and the consequent threat against Riga, Livonia and Estonia, while the rest were garrisoned in Helsinki and Sveaborg, as shown above, and the 42nd Corps was left to fulfil its task with only the 106th Division. To the desperate demands of the 42nd Army Corps for reinforcements, the VIth Army could only answer that they had no troops available to replace the division which had been withdrawn.⁶² On the other hand, in step with the progress of fortification work, the Gulf of Finland seemed to be ever more safely defended by the coastal forts and the minefields as well as by the fleet at Sveaborg.

Fortification work was also started on the Åland islands at the beginning of the summer of 1915. Together with the island forts in the Turku archipelago, these forts formed the *Abo-Olandskaia Shernaia Pozitsiia* or Turku-Åland Archipelago Position on the right flank of the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great. Since 1906-07, the idea had been to base light naval forces here to attack the flank and rear of an enemy approaching the main defence line between Naissaari (Nargen) and Porkkala. The island position also had a certain importance in guarding the Gulf of Bothnia, though it was not possible to close the northern gulf as safely as the Gulf of Finland, because there was broad open water between Åland and Sweden, and above all because Sweden's neutrality could not be trusted; Sweden might turn into an invader herself.

That is why the coast had to be closely guarded both by the border guards and the regular army troops. The front of the 42nd Army Corps was turned from the south and south-west to the west, and instead of the Kymijoki, the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia became the foremost line of defence in Finland.

An additional factor in pushing the forward defence line to the Bothnian coast was probably the importance of the Grand Duchy for the economic war effort, discussed above; Finland was no longer merely a glacis for the defence of the Imperial capital as it had been for the past hundred years.

62 RG VIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 24, VIth Army to the 42nd Army Corps 26. VIII 1915.

After the 107th had left the country, the 106th Division was given more detailed instructions for its task of defending the coast from Lappohja up to Uusikaupunki, and to observe the coast from there up to Vaasa. Oulu was also to be defended and the enemy was to be prevented from crossing the River Tornio. The Baltic fleet was asked to help by giving early warning to the army corps of enemy movements close to the Finnish coasts.⁶³ In the harbours which were still kept open on the Gulf of Bothnia at Rauma, Mäntyluoto, Kaskinen, Vaasa, Pietarsaari, and Kokkola, preparations for mining the passageways were made in case Sweden should join the enemy.⁶⁴

The military staffs in Finland reminded the VIth Army that they did not have sufficient troops to occupy the entire coast of the Gulf of Bothnia, and that military troops were not to be dispersed in small detachments, especially as they were not trained for coastal guard duties. The 42nd Corps and the 106th Division would have preferred to keep their troops concentrated, ready to fend off small landings, or, if a major landing should take place, to retreat from the coast to the lake district. There, in the interior of Finland, fortifications could be constructed on the narrow isthmuses between the lakes. Because of the planned withdrawal from the coast to the interior redoubt, the naval fortresses also had to start fortifying their rear or landward fronts towards the north from Sveaborg, Porkkala and the temporary Lappohja anchorage close to Hanko.⁶⁵

Like the pre-war plans and directions, the new tasks given to the 42nd Army Corps were very detailed, with every possible move of the supposed enemy taken into account, so that little initiative was left to the executive officers.⁶⁶

As instructed, the 106th Division positioned its 423rd Regiment on the right flank to guard Tornio and to observe the coast down to Kristiinankaupunki, while the 422nd and 421st Regiments were positioned to defend the most menaced region Pori-Peipohja-Rauma, and the 424th Regiment stood in reserve at Hämeenlinna with the

63 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 24, Boevaia zadacha Korpusa i mery eia osushchestvleniia, 2. VI-31. X 1915.

64 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 24, Commander of the Baltic fleet to the 42nd Army Corps commander 18. VI 1915.

65 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 24, the 106th Division to 42nd Army Corps 6. VII 1915, Baltic fleet to the 42nd Army Corps 13. VII 1915, Commander of the 42nd Army Corps Lieutenant General Resin to the VIth Army 14. VII 1915.

66 Order for the 42nd Army Corps 17 July 1915, Sota-arkisto T 19168/5.

additional task of guarding the railway from Tampere to Riihimäki and Kouvola.⁶⁷

The positions of the infantry divisions and regiments given here and in footnotes on the previous pages existed in June 1915, but there were numerous transfers, and it is difficult but, happily, also unnecessary to catalogue all the changes. For example, in August 1915 it was the 421st Regiment which had to guard the northern coast. Its third battalion was garrisoned at Tampere, and the first and second battalions were dispersed at Vaasa, Kaskinen, Kokkola, Kemi, Simo, Oulu, one company at each place. There was also an armoured train at Oulu in August 1915.

These troops had recently been formed from the militia *druzhiny* and it was reported, for example, that the first and second battalions of the 424th Regiment had trained satisfactorily in rifle shooting and were ready for battle, while the third battalion was extremely weak in this respect.⁶⁸

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In October 1915 new recruit *druzhiny*, of which the 16th was trained at Viipuri, joined the VIth Army and the 43rd Army Corps, but only a cavalry detachment was added to the 42nd Corps.⁶⁹

In the spring of 1916, the VIth Army staff reviewed the situation in its area. They expected renewed German operations either towards Kiev, or Moscow, or Petrograd. The eventual attack on the capital was supposed to consist of thirty divisions. It was not very probable that the Germans would use their fleet for the operation because no decision had taken place in the North Sea; nevertheless, the enemy had a sufficient number of freighters for transporting from seven to twenty divisions. Of the probable objectives of the attack, a landing on the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia presupposed the silencing or taking of Åland, where the defences were not yet completed. If the enemy succeeded in penetrating the Gulf, they would absolutely dominate the sea and a landing was very probable. The other possible objective, the Gulf of Finland, was closed by two mine belts, the foremost from Hanko to Tahkona with torpedo flotillas on the flank with bases at Turku-Åland and the Moon Sound, and the main belt at Porkkala-Naissaari, protected by heavy coastal batteries. Trying to break these

67 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 24, Major General Stankevich, prikaz po 106-i pekhn. div. 19. VII 1915.

68 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 132, raskvartirovanie chasti korpusa 1915.

69 RGVIA fond 2262 opis' 1 delo 24, boevoi raspisanie VI Armii 18. X 1915.

defences would cause heavy losses to the enemy and would scarcely succeed.⁷⁰

A more likely possibility was a land attack from Courland and Lithuania towards Riga and Livonia, but fending off that operation was the task of the XIIth Army, while the VIth Army and the 42nd Army Corps concentrated on defending the immediate approaches to Petrograd.

The Russians' intention to commence a serious defence of Finland itself from the very coast grew stronger in 1916. However, the main fortified defence line was still positioned along the westward border of the interior lake district, though the idea of withdrawing even further to the east was kept in mind.

The corps staff reviewed their defensive possibilities and agreed on the general lines sketched by the army staff. In the south-west, the Turku-Åland position could be regarded as satisfactorily prepared for defence, and the north-west coast, the top of the Gulf of Bothnia, was rather distant from the enemy's goals. Thus the assumption was that the enemy would land somewhere on the coast between Lappohja and Turku, or in the Rauma-Pori region. The landing and advance were supposed to take some time, which would make possible the transfer of reinforcements from Petrograd to Finland.

The coastal belt with its good roads was narrow and easy to defend as the Sveaborg fortress and the Baltic fleet secured the Gulf of Finland. The enemy was supposed to have a natural base for its operations in Swedish-speaking Pohjanmaa, from where roads traversed the lake district to the east of Viipuri, but the distance to be marched by the enemy was long, and the lake system of Saimaa could be crossed only through a few narrow isthmuses which were easy to close with fortifications.

Landings in the far north could be regarded as diversions from the main attack, because the distance from Tornio or Oulu to Joensuu and from there to Petrograd was even longer and more difficult than that through the lake district.

Work had already started on the main defence line from Helsinki-Tampere-Keuruu-Saarijärvi-Nurmes on the western edge of the lake district. Now orders were given to be prepared to construct a fortified rear position from Säkkijärvi to Lappeenranta and from there to

70 RG VIA, fond 2031, opis' 1, delo 159, oborona poberezhia Baltiiskogo moria, p. 25 ochetnaia raporta No 2 razvedyvatelnogo shtaba VI Armii 11. III 1916.



An artillery firing position on the dry-land front of the Helsinki-Sveaborg fortress during the First World War, with an 6" obsolete cannon. The earthen walls were replaced by concrete constructions as soon as money, materials, and labour force allowed.
Photo: Sotamuseo 1518 N 83.

Savonlinna and even further to Joensuu.

The coast of the Gulf of Bothnia was guarded even more closely than in 1915. The staff of the 42nd Army Corps was in Tampere, the 106th Division staff was transferred to Pori with the 424th Chud Regiment and artillery battalion, and the 421st Tsarskoe Selo Regiment to Rauma. The 423rd Luga Regiment was positioned at Vaasa, while the 422nd Kolpino Regiment was left at Hämeenlinna as a general reserve. For a time the reserve was reinforced by the 457th Korochansk and the 458th Dudzhansk Regiments of the 115th Division, recently brought to the country, but they were soon transferred to Kuopio and Mikkeli to start constructing field fortifications in the rear position. Obstacles and desmolitions were to be prepared in such coastal regions as were expected to be occupied by the enemy. The 40th Sapper Battalion staff was at Tampere.

Detached immobile coastal batteries were stationed at the main harbour approaches of the Gulf of Bothnia.⁷¹

⁷¹ Rauma 3rd, 4th(half=2 guns), 13th, 15th detached batteries; Pori 4th(half), 2nd; Kristiina 8th, 10th, 11th, 14th; Vaasa 9th; Uusikaarlepyy 18th, 17th; Pietarsaari 5th, 16th; Kokkola 17th, 6th. RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 151, kvartirnoe rospisanie 1. XII 1915.

The units of the 115th division mentioned above only remained in Finland for a short time and were transferred to the garrison of the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great on southern side of the Gulf of Finland.

A detached 2nd Baltic Cavalry Brigade staff was formed and quartered at Tampere to lead the 8th Orenburg Cossack Regiment of six sotnias at Tuusula and the new 3rd Baltic Cavalry Regiment of four squadrons in Turku.⁷²

In 1915–16, border guard troops were strengthened in Finland to spare the 106th Division from what was for them the alien task of guarding the coasts of the Gulf of Bothnia and the Karelian Isthmus as well as the Russo-Finnish border against illegal emigration and enemy infiltration or arms smuggling. By the end of 1916, there were four regiments of the Petrograd Border Guards Brigade, and four foot regiments of the Detached Finland Border Guards Brigade (formed in 1916), both brigades with their sapper detachments, in all a little over 4,000 men.⁷³

New militia detachments were brought to the country. In Ostrov in the Novgorod region the 92nd Militia Brigade had been stationed with its 328th, 367th, 370th, 391st and 540th *druzhiny*, in all about 10,000 men. In the spring of 1916, the staff of the brigade with three of its *druzhiny* was transferred to Finland, leaving the 370th and 540th in Russia, but with the 32nd, 33rd and 34th *druzhiny* added to the brigade. The troops of the *druzhiny* were positioned in companies, platoons or even smaller posts to guard positions prepared in the rear of the field troops, as well as railways and bridges.⁷⁴ The militia

72 RGVIA, fond 8260, opis 2, delo 54, Prikaz 42mu Armeiskomu korpusu 27. VII 1916.

73 On 1st January 1917, the reported strength of the 42nd Army Corps was:

– 106th Division	14,208
– detached Finland Border Guards Foot Brigade	1,458
mounted sapper detachment	61
– Petrograd Border Guards Brigade	1,770
mounted sapper detachment	255
– 40th Sapper Battalion	1,259
– 42nd Motorcycle Detachment	39
– fourteen detached immobile coastal batteries (four old cannons of 6" or 42" in each)	
– 120th Artillery Brigade 17x 3" field guns, the number of gunners not given.	

Kronstadt, with its 3,325 men, was for a while part of the corps, but lies outside Finland.

RGVIA, fond 2262, opis 1, delo 153, boevoi sostav, boevoi rospisanie i obezpechenie vsemi vidami dovolstvaia.

74 The brigade headquarters in Helsinki, *druzhina* headquarters 32nd at Kouvola, 33rd Oulu, 34th Tammisaari, 328th Savonlinna and Antrea, 367th Lappeenranta,

brigade was not part of the 42nd Army Corps, but would have been operationally subordinated to the corps in case of an enemy attack, with the 33rd *druzhina* concentrated at Seinäjoki, and the 34th, the 328th, the 367th and the 391st at Tampere-Toijala, while the 308th, which arrived in September 1916, and the 32nd were to continue their railway guarding duties.⁷⁵

Unceasing worries

During 1915 and 1916 the Baltic fleet mainly stayed in its anchorages. The flagship *Riurik*, the first battleship division and the first dreadnought division were at the Helsinki anchorage protected by the Sveaborg fortress, as was one cruiser brigade and most of the torpedo boat divisions, with another cruiser brigade, a few torpedo boats and submarines at Reval.⁷⁶ Only ships detached to the Gulf of Riga saw battle, to be described below. The increasingly strong defences closed the Gulf of Finland, and the Russian Baltic fleet, very superior in numbers to Prince Henry's fleet, tied itself to the defences by adopting the role of monitors or floating batteries for the battleships. The navy in fact blockaded its main forces in the Gulf. The minelaying raids on dark autumn nights were quite vexing for the Germans, but could not upset the German domination of the western part of the Baltic sea. On the other hand, the British mastery of the North Sea tied down the main part of the High Seas fleet, causing only obsolete armoured ships to be left for Prince Henry to guard the Danish Straits, while the Admiral at Libau had only a token force at his disposal.

In 1916, as with the 42th Army Corps, the Russian Baltic fleet also planned rear positions in case it should be compelled to give up its forward position at the mouth of the Gulf of Finland. The construction of bases started at Kotka and Koivisto,⁷⁷ mine fields were planned in

391st Hämeenlinna. RG VIA, fond 8260, opis' 2, delo 54, o sosredotochenii brigady 8. II–30. X 1916.

75 RG VIA, fond 8260, opis' 2, delo 54, p. 99, Inspektor zapasnykh voisk Severnago fronta komanduiushchemu 92. br. na sluchai ekstrennago vysova k boevoi deiatel'nosti, 6. IX 1916.

76 *Riurik*, flagship; I brigade: *Andrei Pervozvannyi*, *Pavel I. Tsesarevich*, *Slava*; II brigade: *Gangut*, *Sevastopol*, *Petropavlovsk*, *Poltava*; I cruiser brigade: *Gromoboi*, *Makarov*, *Baian*; II cruiser brigade in Reval: *Rossiia*, *Bogatyr*, *Oleg*, *Avrora*, *Diana*. RG AVMF, fond 418, opis' 1, delo 158, Spisok otriadov i sudov Baltiiskogo moria (1916).

77 RG AVMF, fond 418, opis' 1, delo 414, perepiska po oborudovanii portov i baz

the central region of the Gulf across the navigation channels at Suursaari, and batteries of heavy 12"-10" guns with 6" supporting guns were wanted for Lavansaari, Someri and Kilpisaari.⁷⁸ But the withdrawal to the Suursaari position and the Koivisto base was to be taken only when the army was compelled to leave the lake plateau. And preparations for withdrawal did not mean desisting from the basic idea of a defence in Finland, a defence always intended to keep the country in Russian hands and prevent the enemy from approaching Petrograd.⁷⁹

In 1916 the British submarines under Commander Francis Cromie achieved their greatest success, while the Russian fleet was bound the defence position in the Gulf of Finland.

The 42nd Army Corps still complained of the insufficiency of their forces, and especially of the obsolescence of their artillery, the minimal number of machine guns granted them, and the lack of labour for the preparation of planned positions whose total length exceeded 1,500 versts. But the corps did not receive any permanent reinforcements, only promises of help if the Swedes should join the war. Then, a guards corps would be sent, one division to occupy the region of Tampere–Lempäälä, another division to Urjala–Toijala–Hämeenlinna; and an infantry corps, one division to Lahti and another to Kausala–Kouvola; and also a cavalry corps to guard the sparsely populated parts of eastern Finland, one division to Iisalmi, another division to Siilinjärvi–Kuopio, and a third division to Suonenjoki. The 42nd Army Corps was to delay the enemy as much as possible and then, after the reinforcements had arrived, to concentrate in the region of Vaasa.⁸⁰

The main approach routes were prepared for defence with field fortifications, guns positioned in harbours, and permanent fortresses constructed on the rear or land side of Helsinki and Viipuri. In time of war, money was freely spent and plans were realized for which the military had begged in vain for decades.⁸¹ Nevertheless, the work

Kotka, Kem, Rognskul, Biorko 14. I 1915-26. VIII 1917.

78 RGAVMF, fond 418, opis 2', delo 234 ob usilenii morskoi tylovoi positsii v Finskoi zalive, lanvar' 1917.

79 RG VIA, fond 2262, opis 1', fond 26, from General van der Vliet of the VIth Army, from Ruszkii of the Northern Front, to the 42nd Army Corps 5. I 1916, 8. I 1916, predlozheniia boevykh deistvii 42 armeiskago korpusa.

80 RG VIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, fond 28, Plan oborony Finliandii 22. IV 1916.

81 There was waste and corruption, too. For example, the Finnish businessman Aleko Lilius relates of innumerable 'inspection fees' which various authorities demanded before accepting construction plans. Lilius also tells how Uusikaarlepyy lost its railway when the Mäkiluoto fortress needed rails; wooden beams were floated in

proceeded slowly because of insufficient material and labour.⁸² The Sveaborg fortress calculated that it needed 1,036 guns of various calibres for its landward positions, while in January 1916 only 318 guns existed.⁸³ About 30,000 unemployed Finns were hired for fortification works. In addition, about 3,000 Chinese coolies dug trenches for the Russian army, provoking much comment in the country by their strange habits and behaviour.⁸⁴

In October 1916, the rear position was reconnoitred and operations planned there, positions to be fortified were marked out and field fortifications started. It was also stressed that the estuary of the Kymijoki and the harbours of Kotka and Hamina had to be included in the naval rear position, lest the enemy should circumvent the position through coastal passages.⁸⁵ The importance of lake flotillas was again stressed, for reconnoitring and communication purposes, for the protection of flanks and for preventing the enemy from crossing the waterways. In the absence of proper warships, small passenger steamers and tugs were requisitioned and equipped with field guns. Finns used to ridicule these flotillas, regarding them only as a means for their crews and commanders to escape service on the battle front,⁸⁶ which may be true, but they could have been useful if the enemy had attempted a lateral attack from the west to the east through the lake district.⁸⁷ On the main battle front and later in the Russian Civil War, improvised river and lake flotillas played an active role.⁸⁸

The landward positions of the naval fortresses were to be defended by army troops. These detachments on both sides of the Gulf of Finland and in the island positions on Åland and the Moon Sound did

stormy seas to the fortress; fifty hedgehogs were acquired from Sweden to fight poisonous snakes in the islands... Lilius, *Nuori mies panee toimeksi*, passim, particularly pp. 100-15.

82 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 106, Commander of the Baltic Fleet to the 42nd Army Corps 21. I 1917.

83 RGAVMF, delo 353, opis' 2', delo 5, pp. 30-35, Zapiska po voprosu ob artilleriiskom vooruzhenii sukhoputnogo fronta Sveaborgskoi kreposti, 28. I 1916.

84 I have heard that daughters even of society circles were interested in them and that some of the best families in the country have Chinese genes as a consequence, but there is neither written nor even visible proof.

85 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 28, raport Shtabu Sev. Fr. 29. X 1916, Shtab Sev. Fr Glavnomu rukovoditel'iu rabot v tylu 15. XII 1916.

86 Ruohonen, *Laivoja ja laivamiehiä Tampereen vesillä*; (Memoirs of Inland Lake Steamers and Sailors).

87 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 37 o satakundskoi flotilii 5. I 1917.

88 *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota 1696-1996*, vol. II, pp. 209-28.

not belong to the 42th Corps but were united under the "commander of the dry-land forces", *sukhoputnyia voiska*, of the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great. The regular Sveaborg garrison now consisted of two regiments of fortress artillery, two sapper companies, two mine battalions, one aviation company, and one telegraph company. The garrison was strengthened by field troops; there was the 428th *Lodeinopoleinyi* Infantry Regiment of the 107th Division, as well as the 128th Infantry Division with its 509th *Gzhatskii*, 510th *Volkhovskii*, 511th *Sychevskii*, and 512th *Desnenskii* Regiments. In the Turku-Åland Archipelago Position, in addition to the coastal batteries, there were at first detached infantry companies and field guns on different small islands, with a detached battalion being formed at Turku to be transferred to Mariehamn, the capital of Åland. Later a rifle regiment of the officers' rifle school was transferred to Åland as well as some detached field batteries. As everywhere, numerous auxiliary detachments increased the hordes of soldiers, especially non-combatants.⁸⁹ The reports do not give the number of men in the various detachments; in war-time conditions the numbers were constantly changing.⁹⁰

At the end of 1916, the dryland artillery regiments of the Sveaborg fortress were dissolved and instead the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Fortress Artillery Brigades were set up, with artillery battalions numbered from 1 to 24, eight in each brigade, in all seventy-two heavy and twenty-four light batteries. The necessary additional cadres for the new formations were taken from the 107th, 118th and 128th Infantry Divisions, which had to train new men to replace those given up.⁹¹ The orders making these changes were not accompanied by any explanation, but evidently the fortress artillery was given a stronger and more elastic organization.

The battle plans were destined to remain on paper and the fortifications remained unused, because neither Germany nor Sweden

89 Twelve companies and a machine-gun and a training detachment plus working parties, with staff at Dalkarby. RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 2', delo 3, Abo-Olandskaia ukreplennaia pozitsia 1915-1916, p. 44: kvartirmoe rospisanie garnizona ostrova Oland.

90 Kvartirmoe rospisanie chastei voisk, podchinennykh Komanduiushchemu flotom Baltiiskogo moria 1. II 1917. RGVA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 106.

91 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 2, delo 14, p. 133, Prikaz Glavnokomanduiushchago armiiami Severnago Fronta i Flotom Baltiiskogo Moria 30. IX 1916; p. 321, prikaz sukhoputnym voiskam 15. II 1917.

invaded Finland before Russia left the war in 1917. But the preparations show how serious the danger of a Swedish or German landing seemed to the Russian staffs, and how little they trusted their ability to defend their positions. The plans do mention the importance of a tough defence, but the care given to preparing rear positions ever more to the east seems rather defeatist. The defeatist attitude was, of course, quite reasonable in the light of battle experience on the Eastern front in 1914–16.

If the enemy had invaded Finland, the country would have been burned by the retreating defenders on the traditional Scythian–Kutusovian model. Plans were made and orders given, first of all for moving offices and transferring public archives and the cash of the banks from the coastal towns to the interior. Means of transport were earmarked for the operation, and the fortress of Viipuri was made ready to receive the treasury of the Bank of Finland in the event of German cruisers approaching the Finnish coast. Only the basic functions of the Governors' offices were to be kept up in safe localities, while supernumerary officials were to be sent off with two months' salary and transported where they wished.⁹²

The enemy was to be prevented from benefiting from a conquered Finland. All provisions were to be removed to the interior, the telephone network and everything else that the enemy might find useful was to be destroyed. In February 1915, the provincial Governors were ordered to prepare for the demolition work, and plans for the evacuation of the population were drawn up. People were to walk across the country to eastern Finland, because railways would be available only for military transports. Evacuation was not to be compulsory, but no provision would be made for those who remained; everything was to be either removed or destroyed.⁹³ To liberate the fortress area of Sveaborg of 'harmful elements' in case of an enemy approach, about 200,000 people would have been made to walk from Helsinki to the Kuopio, Mikkeli and Viipuri *gubernii*.⁹⁴

92 Vyvoz po voennym obstoiatelstvom vnutri strani bankovykh chennostei i del Pravitel'svennykh uchrezhdenii. KKK 1914, I department, war act 1-2; O meropriiatiakh po voprosu ob organizatsii evakuatsii grazhdanskikh lits i pravitel'svennykh uchrezhdenii. KKK 1915, I department, war delo 2-6, National Archives of Finland.

93 Instruction to all police officials 22. II 1915; the Governor of Vaasa to his subordinate officials 29. V 1915 and 20. VI 1915, KKK 1915, I department, war delo 2--6 II, National Archives of Finland.

Thus it seems probable that a disaster similar to that suffered by Poland during the Russian retreat in 1915 would have been visited on Finland, too, if the enemy had invaded the country. It seems that some of the Governors were reluctant to plan for a catastrophe on this scale,⁹⁵ but of course the absence of plans would only have increased confusion.

The Swedish danger

The naval situation in the Baltic Sea prevented an enemy invasion of Finland, but the Russians were quite right in expecting an attack from the Gulf of Bothnia.

After General Moltke had failed in the west, but Field Marshal Hindenburg and General Ludendorff had stopped the Russian steam roller in East Prussia, General Falkenhayn tried an attack in the east in order to knock Russia out of the war. The German advance in 1915 swept the Tsar's armies out of Poland, and panic reigned in Petrograd for a while, but by the end of the summer the Germans had run out of steam. Nicholas II dismissed his uncle Nicholas Nicholaevich and took the office of Supreme Commander-in-Chief for himself, leaving the government to the Empress Alexandra and her friend Rasputin, with their protégé Boris Stürmer as the new Prime Minister.

Contrary to Falkenhayn's expectations, the successful conquest of Poland made separate peace with Russia more difficult, because the Germans did not want to give up what they had conquered. Ludendorff especially has been accused of greed, because he believed that Germany could not stand a long war of attrition against the Western Powers without the resources of the area later to be called the *Lebensraum* in the East.⁹⁶

For his part, the Tsar had already decided to re-unite Poland under his sceptre and to take the Turkish Straits, which had been promised to him by his entente allies to humour him and his people after their tremendous losses. The Slavs, suffering under Austrian tyranny, were to be liberated. All this implied the carving up of the Hohenzollern

94 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 2, delo 5, p. 206, Plan evakuatsii 16. IV 1916.

95 Turpeinen, *Keisarillisen Venäjän viranomaisten suhtautuminen jääkäriiliikeseen*, (The Reactions of the Russian Authorities to the Jäger Movement), p. 131.

96 Kitchen, *The Silent Dictatorship; the Politics of the German High Command under Hindenburg and Ludendorff 1916–1918*.

and Habsburg empires.

These contradictory war aims made plans for a separate peace hopeless.⁹⁷

In connection with Falkenhayn's plans in 1915, the Swedish General Staff was asked whether they could supply a couple of Swedish army corps to cross the Gulf of Bothnia and to advance through Finland towards Petrograd. As in 1910, there were people in the Swedish court as well in the diplomatic and officer corps who favoured joining the Germanic war against the Slav menace. German victory would also have dispelled the danger of a radical democratization of Swedish society. However, King Gustav V and the conservative Hammarskiöld government had decided to maintain neutrality, the so-called Activists were left in a minority, and schemes for military co-operation with Germany never grew into definite military plans.

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In the spring of 1916, the Swedish Activists again tried to force the government to abandon neutrality, using the Russian fortification works on Åland to agitate public opinion against the eastern threat. This worried the Russians and they spoke about pulling down the fortifications at the end of the war. Although no definite undertaking was given, the Swedish government and parliament were satisfied, and thus the end result of the Activist agitation only confirmed Sweden's neutrality.⁹⁸

As far as is known, there was no Russian intention to mount an offensive against Sweden or towards the Norwegian Atlantic coast. It is true that General Kuropatkin had written that Russia was not satisfied with the border in the north, and the Russian Consul at Hammerfest dreamed of his station being annexed by his country.⁹⁹ But Russia never had the force to do anything in the distant periphery, and she had enough Arctic coast of her own, where the port of Romanov or Murmansk was being constructed and connected by a railway to the central parts of Russia in 1917.

97 Not the masons, as claimed by Fejtö, *Requiem pour un empire défunt*, passim; otherwise a good exposition of the attempts of negotiated peace during the war.

98 Luntinen, "The Åland Question in the Last Decades of the Russian Empire".

99 Kuropatkin, *Memorien*, p. 50; Jungar, *Ryssland och den Svensk-Norska unionens upplösning*, p. 86, a note on the consul's ideas. Contemporary pamphlets: Hedin, *Ett varningsord*; Emeljanoff, *Rysslands framträngande till Atlanten och de Rysk-Svenska relationerna framtid*; *Svar på 'ett varningsord' af Sven Hedin*; Emeljanoff, *Existerar 'den Ryska faran'?*

At the beginning of the war, the German envoy in Stockholm, von Reichenau, had believed that Sweden would easily join Germany, but his successor von Lucius perceived that the Activists were only a minority, and he opposed the suggestions of Falkenhayn and the other army leaders to put pressure on Sweden.

The German naval staffs calculated that as an ally Sweden might open a few harbours to the German Baltic fleet and help keep the Sound closed, but, on the other hand, the ore convoys sailed safely inside the territorial waters of neutral Sweden, guarded by Swedish warships, while they would have been open to attack by the British submarines if Sweden had joined the war.

Thus the idea of an attack over the sea from Sweden through Finland did exist among the Swedish and German staffs, as the Russians supposed, or perhaps knew from their spies in Stockholm. But, in fact, the danger never was as great as it was conceived by the Russian military and naval leaders, whose duty it then became to plan to repel it.¹⁰⁰

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Revolutionizing a minority nation

The Finnish separatist movement, which the gendarmes had conjuring up since 1905, did exist now, and made the German-Swedish danger seem only more real to the defenders in Finland.

The German leaders intended to revolutionize the minority populations in the Russian Empire and make them ask for German help for their liberation, in order to camouflage Germany's annexationist intentions.

Many of the peoples in East Central Europe were willing to be helped. The Baltic Germans in particular sighed for their liberation from Russia, but also among the Poles, Ukrainians, White Russians, Jews and Caucasians willing collaborators were found, and a League of Russia's Oppressed Minorities was formed under German auspices

100 Stewen, *Saksalaisten suunnitelma hyökätä Pietariin Etelä-Suomen kautta I maailmansodan aikana* (The German Plan of Attacking Petrograd through Southern Finland); Carlgren, *Neutralität oder Allianz, Deutschlands Beziehungen zu Schweden in den Anfangsjahren des ersten Weltkrieges*; Eskola, *Suomen kysymys ja Ruotsin mielipide ensimmäisen maailmansodan puhkemisesta Venäjän maaliskuun vallankumoukseen* (Swedish Opinion on Finland); Schubert, *Schweden und das Deutsche Reich im Ersten Weltkrieg; Die Aktivistenbewegung 1914–1918*; Bohn, *Deutsche Kriegeziele im Ostseeraum im Ersten Weltkrieg*.

in 1916.¹⁰¹

The Finns were considered one of the useful oppressed peoples. Since the days of Bobrikov, they had made known their dissatisfaction with tsarist absolutism and Russian chauvinism.

It is true that a group of Finnish Constitutionalist intellectuals and businessmen hoped for the victory of the liberal Western Powers, whose greater resources strengthened belief in their final success, while a German victory threatened to strengthen absolutism, conservatism and militarism throughout Europe. But even an Anglophile like Professor Edward Westermarck hoped for the defeat of the entente, because the thought of a victorious Russia was unbearable.¹⁰²

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There was the slight hope that were Germany defeated, Russia would become less important as an ally for the West, which then might press Russia to restore the autonomy of Finland. But during the war it was quite impossible.¹⁰³ As Russia's losses grew, the Western Allies had to desist from any interference in her internal affairs in order not to alienate her from the alliance.

In November 1914, when the Great Programme of Russification was published, a few Finnish students decided that this clearly expressed threat made rebellion and separation from the Empire the only way of saving their nation. To them it seemed criminal not to seize the unique opportunity of the Great War to contribute to Russia's defeat.¹⁰⁴ The long-felt frustration erupted in Activism.

Active fighting against the Tsar was a crime not only in Russian law but also in Finnish constitutional and criminal law; it was treason against Finland's legitimate Grand Duke. But many young Finns felt no longer bound by their oath of loyalty and thought of Russia only as the hereditary enemy, claiming that Nicholas II had broken his monarch's oath in 1899.

Because the Finns lacked military skills, and since Sweden kept to its neutrality, the Finnish Activists had to resort to German help. They regarded the scientifically progressive, well-ordered and disciplined

101 S. Zetterberg, *Die Liga der Fremdvölker Russlands 1916–1918*.

102 E. Westermarck, *Minnen ur mitt liv*, p. 346.

103 E. Estlander, *Elva årtionden ur Finland historia*, vol. IV, pp. 277–83; Söderhjelm, *Werner Söderhjelm*, p. 177; Westermarck, *Minnen ur mitt liv*, p. 346; Gummerus, *Aktiivisilta taisteluvuosilta*, pp. 266–67.

104 Landtman, *Finlands väg till oavhängighet*, p. 59.

German Empire as the most noble example of Western culture, in stark contrast to the Asiatic, despotic, bloated Tsarist Empire. They believed in a German victory, because Germany was right, and underestimated German defeats, because Finland's cause depended on Germany's success.

The students were supported by a few of the old Activists of 1904-06, but by very few political leaders, who held their attempt to be a dangerous adventure. Among the politicians only the University Rector, Edvard Hjelt, joined the Activists.

By the beginning of 1915, the Activists had organized an Active Committee and an advisory Military Committee of a few retired officers in Finland, and a Delegation Abroad for the Liberation of Finland in Stockholm as well as a Finnish Office in Berlin, led by Fritz Wetterhoff, a Finnish emigré.

Thus the Germans had no difficulties in calling up a resistance and liberation movement in Finland.¹⁰⁵ In January 1915 an agreement was made on training two hundred Finns as scouts, guides, agitators for revolt and saboteurs behind the Russian lines for Falkenhayn's German-Swedish operation through Finland.

Sweden could not openly aid the Finnish Activists, although most Swedes hoped that Finnish autonomy would be restored. The majority of the Swedes did not want to get involved in a war against Russia, as we saw above, not even in order to help Finland. They hoped that the tsarist government would, in time, develop in a more liberal direction and make possible a negotiated solution to the Finnish

105 There has been heated discussion on whether the Germans or the Finns were the initiators of the movement, and whether it was in fact initially a movement of liberation or only an impetuous start of Activism, which the Germans transformed into a serious military attempt. The discussion has been mostly concerned about the national pride of Finns and the credit due to the students – historically not a very important question. The fact remains that the German schemers found eager collaborators in Finland.

Memoirs by participants: Y. O. Ruuth, *Itsenäisyyspolitiikan edellytykset ja alkuvaiheet* (The Conditions and Early Stages of the Politics of Independence); Gummerus, *Jääkärit ja aktivistit* (Memoirs from the War Years); on German policy towards the Finns: Nurmio, *Suomen itsenäistyminen ja Saksa* (Finnish Independence and Germany); Apunen, *Suomi keisarikunnan Saksan politiikassa* (Finland in the Politics of the German Empire); Menger, *Die Finnlandpolitik der deutschen Imperialismus*; discussion of the initiative: Klinge, *Itsenäisyys - jääkäriiliike - sortokausi* (Independence - the Jäger Movement - the Years of Oppression); P. Zilliacus, *Jääkäri liikkeen synty ja päämäärät* (The Origins and Aims of the Jäger Movement).

question. An independent Finland was not regarded as a viable idea because it was expected to remain dependent on German support and thus to fall under a new oppression. A calm and happy future united with a free, constitutional Russia was preferable.¹⁰⁶ On the other hand, the Swedish Activists supported their Finnish brethren in hoping that a Finnish rebellion or a German attack to the north would draw Sweden into the war, but they failed, as we already saw.

But, in spite of their neutrality, the Swedish authorities, in fact, gave vital aid to the Finns. The Activist Delegation in Stockholm was allowed to work without any obstruction, their communications with home and Berlin were not disturbed, and men who only spoke Finnish were helped on their journey through the country from the border to Stockholm and further forward to Germany.

Not all the offices of the German government were enthusiastic about scheming with rebels and revolutionaries. The Ministry of War was reluctant to give money for their training, and soon Falkenhayn's interest, too, turned to the West. But a few influential people at court, in the *Auswärtiges Amt*, and in the military headquarters favoured the idea, and it was decided to continue the training course. Even if it promised no immediate profit for Germany, it would prove the high cultural level of the Empire and encourage other small peoples to join her cause. In September 1915, William II signed an order to train two thousand Finns as regular soldiers. They might be found necessary or useful for Germany in her Russian policy, but no binding commitment to Finnish autonomy or independence was given.

The Activist Committees in Finland organized recruitment for the *Ausbildungstruppe Lockstedt*. In all, 1,896 men were inscribed in the rolls. The first 200-strong group had consisted mainly of Swedish-speaking students, but the main body came from all strata of the Finnish population. The patriotic idea of liberating Finland was the basic motive of the movement, but there were also adventurers, of course, or men seeking employment or vainly trying to emigrate to America, or social misfits; of the lower classes, more unmarried men and workers than fathers and farmers took part, because it was easier for them to leave home. Nor did they all adapt well to Prussian discipline, and social dissatisfaction at home was reflected also in the gulf in Germany between the upper-class and more proletarian

106 Gummerus, *Jääkärit ja aktivistit*, p. 160.

members. Many men fell sick, a couple of hundred troublemakers were arrested and transferred to labour detachments or prison camps, four men deserted to the Russian side, and in the end, when the battalion was sent to Finland in 1918, many men were left in Germany because the war of liberation was turning out to be a civil war, too, and the Red trainees could not be trusted.

But for the majority, about 1,200 men, morale triumphed over all difficulties, and the patriotic goal remained.¹⁰⁷

In 1916, the unit was transformed into the Royal Prussian Jäger Battalion No. 27, after which the Finnish liberation or Activist movement is often called the Jäger movement. The battalion was sent to the northern part of the Eastern front to gain battle experience, and, probably, to earn their upkeep. Happily, the sector was mostly quiet and their casualties were few.

In Finland, enough antipathy towards Russia existed for a network of spies to be organized there, but the spies noticed that the population, in general, remained peaceful and passive, and, contrary to what the Activists in Stockholm and Berlin said, no popular rising could be expected unless Swedish or German forces invaded the Grand Duchy and encouraged its inhabitants to rise.¹⁰⁸

In fact, the disarmed Finns would not have had any chance of surviving a rebellion against the Russian army. By its mere presence, the 42nd Army Corps maintained Imperial sovereignty in this border country.

In addition to recruitment for the Jäger movement, agents were smuggled into Finland to annoy the Russians and to sabotage the transport of war materials from Britain through Norway and Sweden to Finland and to the Russian front. And even if no operation in Finland was planned, it was well to keep rumours alive, because the

107 The basic work on Jägers is: Lauerma, *Kuninkaallinen Preussin Jääkäripataljoona 27* (The 27th Royal Prussian Jäger Battalion); Rasila, *Jääkäreiden sosiaalinen tausta ja motiivit* (The Social Background and Motives of the Jägers).

After the independence of Finland was secured, for a major part due to the Jägers, their history was hallowed, and even nowadays critical study of the defectors and Red Jägers has provoked controversy: Lackman, *Jääkärimuistelmia* (Jäger Memoirs) and: Lackman, *Jääkärit marssivat* (The Jägers March).

108 Nachrichten über Finnland, vom 2. August 1914 bis 31. August 1915, BA-MA RM 5/v 4999, Innere Lage Russlands und Zustände seines Heeres Ende 1914; Nachrichten über die russische Armee, einschl. allgem. Kriegsvorbereitungen, vom August 1917 bis 7. März 1917, BA-MA RM 4979. These dossiers contain plenty of information on Russia and Finland during the first war years.

consequent fear kept Russian forces tied down in the country and away from the front.¹⁰⁹

Fantasies of a naval attaché

The existence of the Finnish rebel forces inspired the German naval attaché in Stockholm, Fischer-Lossainen, to scheme for an operation in the north in August 1915. The attaché wrote to the Admiralty Staff¹¹⁰ proposing a landing of the Locksted troops in Åland, which would sound like a trumpet call to men throughout Finland to join the liberation army. Russian forces in Finland and Petrograd would feel threatened, many troops would be tied down in the north, and perhaps even the Russian fleet would be provoked to leave its bases for the fatal battle with the German fleet. Then, with the Finnish army of liberation trained, the Germans and the Finns could land at Oulu, Vaasa, or Rauma and bring arms to additional detachments via Jyväskylä to Iisalmi, Kuopio, and Nurmee, from where two hundred thousand Finns would march towards the south, while the German fleet would attack Helsinki and Sveaborg.

The Russian troops in Finland were reported by the Activists to be badly equipped and insufficiently trained. The eager amateur spies were not very competent in their counting; in their reports, the number of Russians in Finland varied from twenty thousand to one million.

The Finnish Activists dreamed of an independent monarchy reaching to Lake Onega and the White Sea, guarding the German northern flank against Russia. The liberation of Finland would be the first strike against the Eastern colossus, perhaps the signal for a general revolution there.¹¹¹

Fischer-Lossainen also calculated that even if Sweden were to remain watching the Finnish volunteers bleeding white on Åland, which was improbable, at least Germany could remain comforted with

109 Einladung zu einer Besprechung der finnischen Angelegenheiten 29. III 1915; Colonel Zimmermann to Adm. Stab 28. V 1915, BA-MA RM 5/v 4999.

110 *Admiralstab*, the naval counterpart of the army General Staff.

111 Über eine militärische Aktion in Finnland, von Herr Wetterhoff übergeben 24. VIII 1915, BA-MA RM 5/v 5204; P.M.Aussichten einer Erhebung, Sept. 1915; Finnland, eine Denkschrift, streng vertraulich, die Finnländische Kanzlei in Berlin s.d. [summer 1915]. BA-MA RM 5/v 4999; Finnland im Lichte des Weltkrieges, von Friedrich Wetterhoff, Berlin 1916, BA-MA RM 5/v 5000, Nachrichten über Finnland vom 1 September 1915 bis 3 Juli 1917.

the knowledge that everything had been attempted for a German solution of the Scandinavian and Finnish questions.¹¹²

The Imperial Chancellor, Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg, supported the proposal to acquire Swedish support and liberate Finland. Russia had to be further weakened because it still seemed reluctant to sign a separate peace. If the Russians could be pushed back from the north, as was happening in Poland, getting free from the Muscovite nightmare was worth the effort, in the Chancellor's opinion.¹¹³

The Admiralty Staff took Fischer-Lossainen seriously enough to answer him with an reasoned refusal. They calculated that for the proposed attempt at least one division of infantry would be necessary, compared to which the Finnish force would remain quite tiny. Battleships would be needed from the North Sea to secure the dominion of the Baltic Sea and confine the Russian fleet to the Gulf of Finland. Swedish help would be necessary to protect the daily supply transports, or at least permission had to be acquired to use Swedish bases along the route from Germany. And there was always the danger to the ore transports if Sweden should be attracted to join Germany.

Nor was it certain that the occupation of Åland would produce the hoped-for political result. Sweden's policy was so unpredictable that permission had to be asked before planning anything, and the attempt was to be undertaken only if Sweden promised to join Germany – contrary to Fischer-Lossainen's idea to make the attempt in order to provoke Sweden to join it. The prestige of Germany demanded that if an operation were undertaken, it should not miscarry and the Finns could not be left bleeding on Åland.

At this stage, the Admiralty Staff allowed only the gathering of information on Åland in preparation for any operation.¹¹⁴

112 Marine-Attaché für die nordischen Reiche 7. VIII 1915, 14. VIII 1915; P. M. 13. VIII 1915. BA-MA RM 5/v 5204, Ålandsinseln vom August 1915 bis Februar 1916. – Fischer-Lossainen was readily roused to enthusiasm and apparently influenced by the scheming and imaginative Finnish agent in Berlin, Fritz Wetterhoff, who promised that an army of 200,000 Finns could easily be called forth. Über eine militärische Aktion in Finnland, von Herrn Wetterhoff übergeben 24. VIII 1915, BA-MA RM 5/v 5204, Ålandsinseln vom August 1915 bis Februar 1916.

113 Reichskanzler 11. VIII 1915, BA-MA RM 5/v 5204 Ålandsinseln vom August 1915 bis Februar 1916.

114 Vorläufige Bemerkungen, Berlin 15. VIII 1915; Vermerk 25. VIII 1915, BA-MA

The Activists did gather information. They reported that the fortifications on Åland were miserable, occupied by only a penal battalion, led by epileptic, drunken or idiotic commanders, with boats ready for an escape. On the other hand, domination of the Islands would open access to the Gulf of Bothnia, control the traffic between Finland and Sweden, guard the mouth of the Gulf of Finland, enable naval and military operations to take place against the Baltic provinces and Petrograd, and help to control the Russian transport route through northern Sweden from Narvik.

Again, the Admiralty Staff answered that while Åland might be easy to conquer, all German naval forces would thereafter be tied to the permanent defence of the islands. The possession of the islands might induce Sweden to join Germany, but Sweden was not important enough to warrant the operation; her army consisted of 480,000 men, of whom only ten divisions were field troops, and her warships were weak and obsolete.

If Sweden joined the war, it might demonstrate to other neutral countries that Sweden trusted in the final victory of Germany, but it would need material support, its commerce with the West would cease, and the ore transports to Germany would be endangered.

The Admiralty Staff also doubted whether Sweden could be made to join Germany. Sweden might feel tempted by the possession of Åland and the restoration of an autonomous Finland as a shield against Russia, and the destruction by Germany of England's arrogant naval domination would also benefit Sweden. On the other hand, war would be costly, and might cause political difficulties at home and with Denmark and Norway. A victorious strong Germany might also be an unpleasant development for Sweden.¹¹⁵

As a further argument for turning the plan down, the Admiralty Staff calculated that sending a division to Åland would need fifteen transports and, for securing the operation, eight battleships, four battlecruisers, thirteen light cruisers, ten torpedo boat flotillas, nine submarines, two aircraft tenders, four airships, and more than thirty transports for naval supply, plus escorts, minesweepers and auxiliaries. A permanent detachment would be necessary on Åland of two

RM 5/v 5204 Ålandsinseln vom August 1915 bis Februar 1916.

115 Über die Besetzung der Åland-Inseln, von Major v. Beyer 18. XII 1915; Denkschrift über Besprechung 18. XII 1915; Anschreiben zur Denkschrift 21. I 1916. BA-MA RM 5/v 5204.

battleships, three armoured ships, two cruisers, one torpedo boat flotilla, and nine submarines, in order to prevent the Russian fleet from surprising the defenders from the coastal passages. Thus no force would be left for the North Sea, and the whole strategy of naval war would be changed,¹¹⁶ which was of course unthinkable.

While the naval staff spent much ink and paper fending off the objectionable proposals, Falkenhayn only stated that troops were needed on important fronts and could not be spent on uncertain attempts. "I desist from discussing any details".¹¹⁷

Nevertheless, Prince Henry's staff would have liked to take up the planning of the Åland operation. They felt that the OHL¹¹⁸ might consent if the importance of the Gulf of Finland were explained. But the Prince was not given permission for any further planning, and the pilots whom his staff had enlisted at Libau had to be dismissed.¹¹⁹

At the end of 1916, the naval attaché again asked whether he would be allowed to discuss the Åland operation with the Swedes. Permission was not given, with the added reason that now the islands were much more strongly fortified, while eliminating the Russian fleet would need such a large naval force that the principal effort against Britain would suffer.¹²⁰

At the beginning of 1917, Finnish Activists once more tried to explain that the conquest of Åland was not only sensible but dictated by logic, because the Gulfs of Finland and Bothnia and in fact the entire Baltic Sea could be dominated from the islands; Åland was the heart of Russian naval power. The naval staff only commented that the importance of Åland was exaggerated in these repeated proposals and the difficulty of the conquest belittled. In the summer of 1917 the naval staff repeated their standpoint.¹²¹

The proposals of the German naval attaché were not viable, but they indicate the kind of operations that were being thought about,

116 Erwägungen über ein Unternehmen gegen die Ålandsinseln, Jan 1916; Erwägungen über ein Unternehmen gegen die Ålands Inseln 21. I 1916 (two different, complementing papers). BA-MA RM 5/v 5204.

117 Falkenhayn to Adm.Stab 3. II 1916. BA-MA RM 5/v 5204.

118 OHL = *Oberste Heeresleitung*, the army headquarters.

119 O.d.Ostseestreitkräfte 6. II 1916; Chef d.A.d.M an O.d.O. 2. IV 1916. BA-MA RM 5/v 5206, Ålandsinseln vom 18. Februar 1916 bis 5 April 1918.

120 Ludendorff an Adm.Stab 29. X 1916; Adm.Stab an Ludendorff 5. XI 1916. BA-MA RM 5/v 5205.

121 Pro memoria von J. Castrén 30. I 1917, Erwägungen über ein Vorgehen gegen die Ålandsinseln, Adm. St. 2. VII 1917. BA-MA RM 57v 5205.

though not developed into real military or naval plans. The Russian generals and admirals in Finland and Petrograd had reason enough to be worried about an enemy landing on Åland or on the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia and felt they had to prepare defences against an enemy advance through the interior lake district. Measures against a Finnish rebellion had also to be taken.

Measures against the Jäger movement

It seems that for a long time the Russian authorities in Finland had no inkling of the recruitment of nearly two thousand Finns into the enemy army. In spite of the gendarmes and border guards, the Jäger recruits could at first leave the country legally, crossing the border from Tornio to Haaparanta, with the explanation that they were going to study in Sweden, to emigrate to America, or to be employed on Allied or Norwegian ships.

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The military authorities received intimation of preparations for a rebellion and of the smuggling of young men out of the country in 1915,¹²² but Colonel Eremin, the chief of gendarmes in Finland, belittled the danger. He believed that the Finns would certainly not rise until a successful revolution in the interior of the Empire had made their rebellion safe. Nor had the Governor-General any knowledge of a rebellious organization, and young men did not seem to be emigrating in abnormally large numbers. As late as January 1916, it was believed that the Germans might be recruiting a few Finns to act as guides in the event of a landing, but no information of preparations for an armed rebellion existed.¹²³

But then more information came from spies via Paris, London and Rotterdam, and a couple of Activist recruiters were arrested, who proved surprisingly voluble during their interrogation. However, it was not until the summer of 1916, when the Jäger battalion was transferred to the front and four deserters went over to the Russian side, that the authorities were reliably informed of the size of the movement, of the organization of the battalion, and even of the names of many of the

122 The VIth Army staff to Seyn 28. IX 1915, the 42th Army Corps to Seyn 30. IX 1915. KKK 1915, I department, delo 2-85, National Archives of Finland.

123 Chief of gendarmes to General Kafalov 31. X 1915, Seyn to the VIth Army 15/28. XI 1915, Seyn to the Ministry of the Interior 3. XII 1915, Chief of gendarmes to Seyn 25. I 1916. KKK 1915, I dept, delo 2-85, National Archives of Finland.

Jägers.¹²⁴

Outraged, the staff of the Northern Front demanded tighter control of emigration from Finland and also demanded a proclamation that illegal emigrants would be sentenced to death if caught and, if not caught, their closest relatives would be punished.¹²⁵

Governor-General Seyn did tighten the passport control. For example, he demanded that a photograph be attached to the passport and that a paid ticket to America be shown by a prospective emigrant. But Seyn did not prohibit all emigration, explaining that it would cause unrest in the country. Nor did he proclaim the threat of death, which would have been an admission of the existence of the rebel movement, a proof of the incompetence of the regime, and a confession of a centennial failure to make good subjects out of Finns admitted to the Empire in 1809.¹²⁶

The relaxed attitude of Seyn to the rebellious Jäger movement seems surprising, especially when compared to how nervously he had reacted to the non-existent *Voima* movement before the war. A partial explanation lies in the fact that Eremin was more competent and less credulous than Utgof had been. Again, during the state of war and under the military censorship, there were no popular meetings or noisy press articles, as there had been in 1911-12, to alarm the authorities. Now it was seen more clearly than before the war that the Activist movement was supported only by a tiny fraction of the population. Nor did Seyn need for his own purposes the alarmist information, which he had probably not completely believed even before the war. The separatist higher administration of Finland, accused of allowing the activity of the *Voima*, had been replaced by Russians or loyal

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124 Kratkii ocherk prestupnago obshchestva, obrazovavshago v 1915 godu v Finliandii, s tseliu otdeleniia poslednei ot Rossii, pri pomoschi Germanii. KKK 1915, I dept, delo 2-85, National Archives of Finland.

What the Russians knew of the Jäger movement was first studied by J. Manninen, "Venäläisten ulkomailta saamat tiedot jääkäriliikkeestä" (Information from abroad about the Jäger Movement received by the Russians); and a thorough study was made by Turpeinen, *Keisarillisen Venäjän viranomaisten suhtautuminen jääkäriliikkeeseen*.

125 The VIth Army staff to Seyn 3. XI 1915; 27. I 1916; 15. II 1916; 3. V 1916, KKK 1915, I department, delo voiny 13-14; the VIth Army to Seyn 6. VIII 1916, 12. VIII 1916, KKK Hd 48, National Archives of Finland.

126 Seyn to Goremykin 10. XII 1915; Seyn to the Council of Ministers 18. I 1916; Seyn to the Northern Front staff 4. IV; Seyn to the Northern Front staff 11. V 1916. KKK 1915, I department, delo voiny 13-14, National Archives of Finland.

Finns, and it was in Seyn's interest to show his competence as keeper of law and order in the militarily important border country. A complete prohibition on crossing the Swedish border would have made emigration to Germany more difficult, but the consequent dissatisfaction of the population would have been a much more serious problem than the loss of a few potential traitors over the frontier.

It seems that wartime taught Seyn the skill of governing, which was necessary because the Empire, which had appeared so mighty in peacetime, now could ill afford any more enemies. For the military, this was more difficult to understand, because they saw the immediate problem but were not trained in the administration of difficult populations.¹²⁷ From the point of view of the survival of the Empire, it is a pity that this wisdom had not been learned earlier. By this time, tsarism had made too many enemies among the peoples of the Empire, and only a few months remained before it was to fall, to the joy of the oppressed peoples.

The arrested recruiters and saboteurs, guilty of treason and due to be punished by death, were conscientiously interrogated by Russian authorities in Petrograd. The investigation took so much time that no conclusion was reached before the prisoners were liberated by the revolutionary mob in March 1917.

Another cause of conflict between the civilian and military authorities was the import of grain to Finland in 1915 and 1916 from the distant *gubernii* of Russia, which Seyn supported and even organized with his usual energy, because the chaotic state of the railways made difficult the acquisition and transportation of grain from the South.¹²⁸ Since Finnish peasants had taken to raising dairy cattle, the country had exported butter but had been utterly dependent on imported grain.

The military authorities, especially the Commander-in-Chief of the Northern Front General Ruzskii and then General v. Plehwe, were suspicious of the grain imports. Why did the Finns hoard grain if not for feeding the enemy expected to land shortly? Seyn explained to

127 Graf, "Military Rule Behind the Russian Front 1914-1917; the Political Ramifications", pp. 390-92. In the large zone of military administration behind the front the generals governed so heedlessly that Graf thinks it was one of the principal reasons of the Russian revolution.

128 Seyn to Moscow, Dvinsk, Kiev, Odessa, Vladikavkaz, Ekaterinodar, Novochoerkassk, Stavropol, Orenburg, and Kazan *gubernii* 1. IV 1915. KKK 1915 II department, delo 58-1, National Archives of Finland.

the generals that grain was only imported to feed the population. Stopping the grain trains would be dangerous because hunger and high prices would cause popular discontent and disorder.¹²⁹ The Northern Front staff complained to the Stavka that the local Governor-General did not support their efforts.¹³⁰ Seyn answered with detailed statistics of grain import and consumption to prove that no stores were being hoarded.¹³¹

Aide-de-Camp General F.F. Trepov was sent to inspect military hospitals in Finland, with the secret task of clearing up the problem of the grain imports. He found that no hoarding of grain had taken place, the amount of grain imported had really been necessary for feeding the population and keeping them peaceful. Nor did Finnish political circles plan separation from Russia; they only wanted their autonomy restored and guaranteed.¹³²

The Stavka believed the Governor-General¹³³ and so did the Council of Ministers. At first, they did not even believe in the existence of the Jäger movement, and after the information was confirmed, they comforted themselves with the fact that the Germans had sent the rebel battalion to the Eastern Front and not to Finland to start a rebellion there.¹³⁴ Even the Northern Front adopted a bit more of a relaxed attitude to the northern border country when General Plehwe was replaced by General Kuropatkin (who after his Governor-Generalship in Turkestan had now once more the chance to prove his incompetence as Commander-in-Chief).

A further example of the wartime administration of the border country was seen when Finnish crofters (small tenant-farmers) were threatened with mass eviction by their peasant landlords in 1916. The crofters' labour was made redundant by the continuing modernization of Finnish agriculture, and they had been threatened with eviction in 1909, when an unconstitutional Imperial decree had put off their

129 Seyn to the staff of the Northern Front 30. I 1916, KKK Hd 104, no. 11, National Archives of Finland.

130 The staff of the Northern Front to the Chief of Staff at Stavka 4. II 1916, KKK Hd 104, no. 11, National Archives of Finland.

131 "Spravka" 24. II 1916, KKK Hd 104, no. 11, National Archives of Finland.

132 Novikova, "Sekretnaia missiia general-adiutanta F.F. Trepova v Finliandiiu, fevral' 1916 goda, po materialam rossiiskikh arkhivov", *Rossii i Finliandiia v XIX – XX vekov*, pp. 41–49.

133 Council of Ministers to Seyn 11. I 1916, KKK Hd 104, no. 11, National Archives of Finland.

134 Lemke, *250 dni v tsarskoi stavke*, pp. 542, 667.

eviction until 1916 in order to acquire time for solving the problem; but no solution had emerged. Now Seyn acquired a new Imperial decree to prevent the eviction.¹³⁵ Even then, Seyn cannot be regarded as a special friend of the crofters; his aim was to avoid mass dissatisfaction and disorder, but whatever his motives, he did protect them.

At the beginning of 1916, rumours were heard that, contrary to earlier decisions, the Russian army was to conscript Finns, because the immense losses at the front were rapidly exhausting the resources of the Russian people; the nomad peoples in Central Asia, until then exempt from military service, became liable to conscription in 1916. The rumours caused some agitation in the border country and were denied.¹³⁶ But in fact, in October, General Shuvaev, the Minister of War, did propose the conscription of all Finnish men between 18 and 43 years of age for the field army or for labour detachments.¹³⁷

The proposal was supported by the *Novoe Vremia*. The editor wondered whether it was really possible that the Finns did not understand that they had to bear their part of the common burden of Imperial defence. After the war and victory, patriotic Russians would be asking about Finland's contribution, and the answer would be that Finland, which Russia had raised into existence from Swedish slavery, had remained an outsider in the mortal battle, and that a few Finns had even sided with the enemy. What could then be left of Finland!¹³⁸

But Seyn found several reasons for opposing even this proposal. He explained that conscription would probably strengthen the Finns in their hostility and separatism. And too many Germanophiles or even German spies and saboteurs would infiltrate the Russian army from among Finnish recruits. German and Swedish agents would also increase their anti-Russian propaganda in the border country, and agitation and disorder would follow. That would necessitate sending more Russian troops to the Grand Duchy. The confusion might provoke the enemy to direct its attack on Finland, and substantial

135 Rasila, *Torpparikysymyksen ratkaisuvaihe, Suomen torpparikysymys vuosina 1908–1919* (The Final Phase of the Crofter Problem), pp. 208–12.

136 The staff of the Northern Front to Seyn 24. I 1916, Seyn to the Stavka 4. III 1916, KKK 1915, I department, delo 2–85, National Archives of Finland.

137 The Minister of the Interior to Seyn 31. X 1916, KKK 1917, I department, delo 2–32, National Archives of Finland.

138 *Novoe Vremia* 3. IX 1916, newspaper clipping in: KKK Hd 48, n:o 4, National Archives of Finland.

detachments from other fronts would have to be transferred to repel the landing. Thus conscripting Finns would weaken, not strengthen, Russia's military forces.

If labour service were ordered instead of military recruitment, Seyn continued, it would be equally detrimental to Russia. The proposed recruitment of 200,000 or 300,000 men into labour battalions out of a male population of 735,000 between 17 and 55 years of age would be a fatal loss to the economy of the Grand Duchy, which, in 1915, had produced war materials to the value of 130 million roubles; in 1916 the sum would probably amount to over 200 million roubles, and in 1917 to even more. Horses, cattle, as well as agricultural products and firewood were exported for the army, the navy, and the Imperial capital. Finns with their carts and horses also transported war materials from the Arctic harbours. Thus the loss of one half of their labour force would cause a corresponding irreparable loss to the Empire's supplies, while disorder and centrifugal tendencies in the border country would only be increased.¹³⁹

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Vital military and economic imperial interests once again made Seyn defend the privileges of the Finns, which he did not accept at all in principle. The proposal of the War Ministry was dropped and Finns were spared being massacred on the Eastern front.

Thus, in the end, the war years of 1915 and 1916 were peaceful and prosperous for Finland, even if public life was closely controlled. The hope of the Activists for independence or guaranteed autonomy seemed to be getting more distant. Entrepreneurs and speculators found Russian domination rather profitable and deplored the radical policy of the Activists, and workers found employment in war production and army work. The hidden conflicts between capital and labour, between town and country, between producers and consumers did grow,¹⁴⁰ but could not come to light under the wartime controls. Russian measures for strengthening the defence of the coasts sufficed to make the German staffs drop all proposals for invading Åland, not to speak of the rest of Finland.

The country seemed to be tightly in Russian hands.

139 Seyn to the Minister of the Interior 16/29. XI 1916. KKK 1917, I department, delo 2-3, National Archives of Finland.

140 Teräs, *Sota ja teollinen modernisaatio*; with a "Summary: War and Industrial Modernization; Rationalization of Labour Process and Industrial Relations During the First World War."

THE EMPIRE POWERLESS

The fall of the Emperor and Grand Duke

The Great War exhausted Russia, revealed the incompetence of the Tsarist regime, and strained the obsolete structure of Russian society beyond breaking-point. In March 1917 the people in Petrograd rose in revolution. The government lost its grip, the Emperor ordered counter-measures, but the troops did not obey. Many generals were delighted at the chance of getting a more competent regime, and Nicholas II had to abdicate on 15 March. The Duma liberals formed a Provisional Government to carry on the war but all principal reforms were to be left until a Constituent Assembly could be convened. Socialists formed a Soviet of soldiers', sailors' and workers' deputies to keep an eye on the bourgeois government.

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When news of the disorders in Petrograd was heard in Finland at the beginning of March, Generals Pashenko and Gulevich as well as Vice Admiral A.I. Nepenin, commanders of Sveaborg, the 42nd Army Corps, and the Baltic fleet, tried to isolate the garrison and the crews to prevent the news from provoking disorder and loss of fighting ability. They remembered also their earlier experiences in 1905 and their consequent fears of the *Voima*. Now the town of Helsinki was to be divided into four areas for rapid restoring of order, with the 509th Regiment responsible for the south-west part, the 510th for the north-west, the 511th for the north-east, the 428th for the south-east, and troops of the 92nd Militia Brigade for the railway station, while the 512th was to be held in reserve with four guns and one sotnia of border guards.¹⁴¹ Seyn, ignorant of the Emperor's fall, reported on 2/15 March that everything remained under control, ordered the re-arrest of Finnish Jäger Activists whom the mob in Petrograd had let loose from the jails, and considered joining the operation against the revolt as ordered by the Emperor. To counter this danger, F.I. Rodichev was appointed Duma Commissar for Finland, and through the military telegraph he contacted Nepenin who had decided to support the Provisional Government. Nepenin invited Seyn and Borovitinov to his flagship and arrested them in the morning of 16

141 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 2, delo 5, p. 186, Prikaz po Sveaborgskoi kreposti 27. II/12.III 1917.

March and sent them to the capital under guard.

However, the news could not be kept secret; sailors and soldiers from Petrograd and Reval informed their comrades in Helsinki, and the news spread rapidly. The disappearance of the Tsar and his representatives meant the cessation of all authority and discipline. Russian soldiers and Finnish civilians participated in public meetings and demonstrations. "Russian soldiers, among them wild Cossacks and Turkmens, their high fur hats carelessly atilt, greatcoats hanging open, waving red flags, rode in their cars crying *svoboda*".¹⁴² Frightened bourgeois people wore red rosettes. Teachers ordered their pupils: "Throw away your Russian textbooks, it is revolution now!". Dissatisfaction had silently mounted during the long war years and the attempted censoring of the news brought it to a sudden explosion; the sailors of the Baltic fleet killed dozens of their officers,¹⁴³ Nepenin among them. Next day, 4/17 March, Rodichev arrived and with great effort calmed down the sailors, who elected Vice-Admiral A.S. Maksimov as their new commander.¹⁴⁴

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Even before the Great War, in 1906 and 1912, sailors had been apt to revolt, and in 1915 Bolshevik cells had been discovered among the crews of the big ships. The battle squadrons had been, for a while, anchored at Lappohja to keep them distant from the workers in Helsinki – or, perhaps, in readiness for the landing operation which Kanin planned – but a summertime transfer was no definite preventive against revolution.

During the Great War, the Russian army had changed. Nearly one million soldiers had been killed, two million had been taken prisoners of war, four million had been wounded, and five million had fallen sick, many of them healed, of course, but a few hundred thousand

142 Glory Leppänen, *Elämäni teatteri*, p. 44.

143 "The peculiar defensive position of the Baltic fleet [...] obviously exacerbated psychological and physical strain [...]", due to harsh discipline, lack of action, and "sense of impending defeat", Saul, *Sailors in Revolt, the Russian Baltic Fleet*, pp. 215–16.

144 There is no end of literature on the years 1917–1918 in Finnish history. The following three can be regarded as classics: Paasivirta, *Suomen Itsenäisyyskysymys* (Finnish Independence); vol. I-II, Polvinen, *Venäjäin vallankumous ja Suomi 1917–1920* (The Russian Revolution and Finland), vol. I-II; Upton, *Vallankumous Suomessa 1917–1918* (The Finnish Revolution 1917–1918). Latest research and detailed bibliography: *Suomen itsenäistymisen vuodet 1917–1920*, (The Years of Finnish Independence 1917–1920), vols. I–III.

died of their wounds or sickness.¹⁴⁵ The losses had been replaced by calling to arms ever new hordes of young recruits and elderly reservists, reluctant soldiers, who were trained in the militia or replacement *druzhiny*. Losses of career officers were made good by training reserve officers from students, clerks, shop assistants, or anybody with a little education, who were far from the pre-war officer corps in their political and professional opinions. They were unable, perhaps also unwilling, to maintain the authority which the regular officers had had, but they were also unable by democratic leadership to bridge the chasm between peasant conscripts and senior officers from the gentry.

Lack of arms, absence of artillery support, faltering supply, inept care of the wounded, news from home of suffering, badly planned operations, the apparent purposelessness of the fighting, and mounting losses increased the war-weariness of the army. During 1917 about two million men left the army without leave.¹⁴⁶

Dissatisfaction seethed especially in the *druzhiny* training in the rear and in the supply echelons, which were insufficiently and incapably officered, and feared being sent to the front. The 'guards' regiments in the Petrograd garrison, who refused to shoot the demonstrators in March 1917, were very different from the Imperial guards who had pacified the Moscow uprising in 1905.

This development was reflected in the reports of the 42th Army Corps "on revolutionary activity". The development of the army and navy in general could not but affect the garrisons in Finland, too, which were in constant contact with the bases at home because of the frequent transfers of replacement soldiers. Sailors were not so frequently changed because the navy did not suffer any comparable losses, but their safe, monotonous, and boring existence was apt to increase dissatisfaction with the harsh discipline. Neither the army nor the navy could do much to counter the reported dissatisfaction, because the reasons for it were hidden in the very structure of the Empire. Agitators and enemy agents were considered the only conceivable reason, and they were zealously detected, but this was not sufficient to counter the threat. In March 1917, sailors and soldiers

145 The problems of the casualty statistics have often been discussed but without any very definite results, e.g. Golovine, *The Russian Army in the World War*, pp. 75-105.

146 Golovine, *The Russian Army in the World War*, p. 260.



"Long live the free Finnish people! Let all nations unite in the free realm of sacred work! Long live free Russia and Finland!" Liberated from the Tsar and all fear of authority, the soldiers of the Russian army easily adopted the mindlessly violent behaviour of the peasant revolts and contributed to the radicalization of the Finnish Left.

Photo: Sotamuseo 613 N 92.

in Finland immediately and eagerly took part in the all-Imperial revolution.¹⁴⁷

A Soviet of soldiers, sailors, and (Russian) workers in Helsinki was organized on 4/17 March, and in time further spontaneous organs were established. The most important of them were the *oblast'* or regional committee for Finland, elected by the garrison soviets on 24

147 The soldiers of the working detachments in the interior of the country are remembered as lazy and disobedient hooligans, by an old Finnish observer with a good memory but no great love for the Imperial army.

April/7 May, and the central committee of the Baltic fleet sailors, called *Tsentrobalt*, on 28 April/11 May.¹⁴⁸ Orders were obeyed only when approved by the soviets, if at all. Freedom did not make the defence organization stronger as the generals had expected when they had supported the coup in March, but degenerated at places into military mob rule whereby the word *svoboda* got its connotation of anarchy.

The political and military consequences of the revolution have, naturally enough, been the principal object of historical research. In officers' memoirs, and in emigrant or western historiography, the revolution seems to have been an outbreak of incomprehensible anarchy, mob rule and murder, and the destruction of the fighting ability of the armed forces. For Soviet historiography, the main interest was in the rivalry between moderate and radical revolutionaries and the predestined victory of the Bolsheviks. According to more recent studies, the committees and soviets tried to make the service tolerable for the soldiers and sailors, but they also felt responsible for the maintenance of order and minimum defence ability of the forces, and they worried about the import of provisions from the South of Russia because of the threat of hunger due to the chaos in Russian railways.

The Russian sailor and soldiers with their soviets influenced Finnish history, too, by their presence and also because they supported Finnish workers in local labour conflicts, and "decisively opposed the attempts of Finnish authorities to isolate them from the labour movement in Helsinki and other towns".¹⁴⁹ The sailors and soldiers participated in demonstrations and the Bolsheviks among them encouraged Finnish Red radicals, though their exact influence in internal Finnish development is difficult to measure.¹⁵⁰

The point of view of an illiterate,¹⁵¹ bewildered peasant soldier, free

148 There were a few hundred Russian workers in workshops and shipyards in Helsinki and Sveaborg, Dubrovskaja, *Gel'singforskii soviet deputatov armii, flota i rabochikh v 1917 godu (mart-oktiabr')*, p. 42.

149 Dubrovskaja, *Gel'singforskii sovet...* passim, labour conflicts pp. 80–81. The author often calls the Finnish authorities "national bourgeoisie".

150 Their activity has been differently appreciated by Soviet and Western historians, as defence of democracy and progress against counter-revolution and bourgeois nationalism, or as agitation for Red revolution and Bolshevik dictatorship against traditional legal Finnish social order.

151 According to Dubrovskaja, p. 100, 60% of the dry-land soldiers in Finland were illiterate. Mass meetings and oral agitation were important in mobilizing them for political activity.

at last from military discipline, but far from home, prey to the different party agitators competing for influence among the men under arms, has been neglected in historiography.¹⁵² Certainly the soliders felt relieved after the inhuman discipline and degrading treatment had ceased, but in spite of the propaganda of the various agitators they may not have totally identified with the parties. They voted increasingly for the Bolsheviks, but obviously not always for political reasons; they wanted to end the war and to get home, which only the Bolsheviks were irresponsible enough to promise to them.

The armed forces had been the last and best guarantee of social order, external security and Imperial regime. But when the humble, long-suffering men, who had conquered the Empire for the Tsars, ceased to obey, the army dissolved into a disorganized mob and the Imperial throne crashed down. It became evident that the ultimate guarantee of the structure of the Empire had not been armed force but the spiritual ties of discipline, obedience, loyalty, and religious belief in the legitimacy of the Emperor.

The definite dissolution of the armed forces did not take place at once and, to a certain degree and for a while, the army still remained a useful political force for the Provisional Government. Moderate socialists, i.e. Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries, were in a majority in the committees, and even though they first suspected the Provisional Government, they then supported it, especially after five Socialists were appointed ministers in May,¹⁵³ and much happened during the summer before the Soviets became Bolshevik organs.

Finland ungrateful

On his trip to Helsinki in March, Rodichev also promised that the Provisional Government would rectify the wrongs done to Finland by the previous regime. The unconstitutional measures were annulled by a declaration on 20 March, the Diet was convened (as elected in 1916 with 103 Social Democrats and 97 deputies from the other parties)

152 There were a few Russian women workers in Helsinki and Sveaborg, with one representative elected to the executive committee of the soviet, but a feminist point of view has been totally absent in any history.

153 On the Russian army in 1917-18: Wildman, *The End of the Russian Imperial Army*, vol. I: The Old Army and the Soldiers' Revolt; vol. II: the Road to Soviet Power and Peace.

and a Finnish Senate appointed, with six bourgeois and six socialist Senators. The liberal Mikhail Stakhovich was appointed Governor-General, Baron Sergei Korff his aide, and a Finn, Carl Enckell, became of Minister State Secretary, i.e. Finland's representative in Petrograd.

Dissatisfied minorities started emerging in all regions of the Empire after the fall of the old regime. In contrast to other separatist populations, there was no need to establish a new nation or borders in Finland, nor any hesitation among the liberals in Petrograd about restoring its constitution.

At first, the Provisional Government supposed that the Finns would be eager to join the new free Russia in her fight against the conservative militarist Central Powers. Rodichev spoke about re-establishing the Finnish troops, who would be disciplined and could replace the disorderly Russian troops in the border country. Kerenskii visited Helsinki and said that the liberty acquired by revolution must be defended, because German capitalism, the enemy of European democracy, threatened freedom both in Russia and in Finland. Because tsarism had disappeared, there no longer existed any necessity for the Jäger movement, whose members would be pardoned if they desisted from their anti-Russian activity.

Admiral Maksimov also called upon the Finns to organize a volunteer corps against the Germans. He declared that now was the time to turn against all enemies, against German spies and saboteurs as well as against the minions of the old regime, to guarantee freedom and brotherhood.

The Activist Committee organized a meeting on the Swedish side of the border at Haaparanta with their Delegation Abroad. Together they decided that there was no ground for trusting Russian promises to respect Finland's rights, and even less reason to join the Russian side in the war. Only German support could guarantee Finland against an eventually revived Russian Empire.

Since the times of Bobrikov, the Russian opposition had believed that the Finns disliked tsarism but would eagerly join a free Russia. Unfortunately, it was not easy for Finns to distinguish Russia and the Russians from their representatives in Helsinki. The idea of forming a nation out of the population of Finland had been built up by an enormous effort in all fields of political, social and cultural life, and Bobrikov's contrary policy of bringing the border country closer to other parts of the Empire had been intolerable oppression and violence in Finnish eyes, and had provoked a chauvinist and almost racist dislike of anything Russian. The 'good' Emperors – Alexander I, II,

and III – were remembered, but mainly as a contrast to the strict Nicholas I and the evil Nicholas II and his satraps. All cultural, economic and political benefits from the dependence on Russia were to be denied and forgotten for a long time. In 1917, politically active Finns only tried to get as free from the great neighbour's domination as possible – though there were differences in what was regarded as possible – and there was no wish in any party in the country to get closer to Russia, however free Russia might now imagine herself to be.

The Finnish political leaders did not answer the requests of Rodichev, Kerenskii or Maksimov, who, on their part, no longer tried to discuss the military question any more. They probably did not want to provoke a direct refusal and defiance of the Provisional Government, especially as it was well known that the Finnish Social Democrats opposed the system of a standing army and preferred the idea of a people's militia.

In the meetings of the principal Finnish political parties in April and May as well as in the constitutional committee set up by the Diet, the general idea was that Finland still belonged to the Empire as established in 1809, but that the Provisional Government had only inherited the Emperor's authority, not the Grand Duke's, whose successor was to be elected by the Diet as ordered by the Swedish Constitution of 1772. The aim was to take over all internal Finnish matters to be decided in Helsinki, and to have autonomy guaranteed internationally, if possible at the future peace conference.

Voices demanding more, even complete independence, were heard in all parties, but for a while the old juridical and de facto ties with the Empire, though weakened by the oppression, were kept alive by the presence of the strong – at least numerically – Russian army in Finland. The opinions of 'the men of independence' were those of a minority. Their most single-minded and purposeful leader was Svinhufvud, freed from his Siberian exile "by God and Hindenburg" as he said.

Nevertheless, a conflict between the Finns and the Provisional Government was brewing. It was difficult for even moderate Finns to understand that their demands for internal independence and international guarantee, for them modest wishes, offended the Russians. The Provisional Government did not want to let the Empire fall apart while the war was going on, and moderate Socialists, i.e. the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries, regarded the separatism of national minorities as treason against the proletarian brotherhood.

Only Lenin promised the Finnish Social Democrats a complete divorce from Russia, in order to make national antagonism disappear and to make possible the unification of all revolutionary proletarians. As yet, Lenin was too unimportant to make much difference, but contact between Finnish Socialists and this presumed German agent made the Provisional Government even more suspicious of Finnish strivings.

The fateful summer offensive of 1917 on the south-western front, initially successful but finally disastrous, definitely destroyed the discipline of the old army and nearly provoked a new revolt in Petrograd.¹⁵⁴ The Provisional Government was revealed as no better than its tsarist predecessor, driving soldiers to die for what were to them incomprehensible imperialist reasons.

Finnish Socialists, encouraged by the information from the capital that the Provisional Government had fallen, supposed the moment propitious for acquiring more freedom for their class struggle. In a majority in the Diet and supported by men of independence in other parties, in all 136 votes, they easily carried through their proposal for transferring sovereign authority in internal questions to the Finnish Diet, leaving only foreign policy and military questions to the Russian government. A minority of 55 moderate bourgeois deputies deplored the hasty provocation of the mighty neighbouring country, as well as the fact that executive and legislative power was being concentrated in the Diet which was dominated by the Social Democrat majority.

Contrary to the hopes and beliefs of Finnish Socialists and Activists, by the end of July Kerenskii was able to overcome the crisis. The Provisional Government revived, and, briefly, opinion in Russia turned to the Right. Bolshevik leaders were arrested or went in hiding. Kerenskii, supported by the Western ambassadors, tried to restore army discipline and induce workers to continue the production of war materials.

Submarines, whose crews had remained loyal to the government, were ordered to sink the battleships in Helsinki if their Bolshevik sailors tried to prevent the restoration of order in Petrograd. Rear Admiral D.N. Verderevskii, whom the Provisional Government had appointed to succeed Maksimov, did not dare to obey such an order. Pavel Dybenko, the Bolshevik leader of the *Tsentrobalt*, went to the

154 Heenan, *Russian Democracy's Fatal Blunder: the Summer Offensive of 1917*.

capital to demand an explanation, but was arrested, and the *Tsentrobalt* was paralysed. For a while, the Baltic fleet obeyed the Provisional Government and the moderate Socialists, and the Helsinki Soviet, realising where the wind blew, also supported the government.

Because the decision of the Finnish Diet was a unilateral *coup d'état*, it almost caused an armed conflict between the Finnish Left and the Provisional Government.

Adventurous activists and cautious Germans

On the main battle fronts, the Great War continued. In Germany, Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg was replaced by the weak Georg Michaelis and later Georg Hertling, while Ludendorff gathered ever more power into his hands. The Russian revolution seemed to liberate Germany from the war on two fronts and make possible annexions in the east. German war aims were defined in more detail; Poland had been proclaimed independent under German and Austrian protection in 1916, and in April 1917 the Germans decided to annex Lithuania and Courland. The acquisition of grain from the Ukraine and oil from the Caucasus were becoming more definite war aims because with these resources Germany might be able to survive the entente *Einkreisung*, or encirclement, and continue to wage a world war. Because the Provisional Government was slow to offer peace, Russian radical revolutionaries were further supported and Lenin was transported from Switzerland to Russia to act as a bacillus of Red revolution.

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As yet Finland was not definitely included in the war aims of the Reich, but to counter the restoration of Finland's rights by the Provisional Government, the *Auswärtiges Amt* declared on 27 March that Finland's independence was not contrary to German interests. This declaration was given to Finnish Activists, but kept secret in order not to prevent a separate peace with Russia.

Ludendorff took the Finnish Jäger battalion under the immediate command of his headquarters, and transferred it from the Courland front to Libau on 25 March. Training was started for prospective officers, non-commissioned officers, sappers, and communications specialists, and for their eventual employment as leaders of the Finnish liberation army.

For the Finnish Jäger Activists, the revolution in Russia caused much headache. They had decided not to join the new Russia, but they could not be sure that all Finns would refuse the co-operation

that had been offered. "If we should accept autonomy from Russia now, all the work for the Finnish cause among the Central Powers during the war will be rendered in vain."¹⁵⁵ If Finland had stayed in the Russian Empire, the Jägers would have remained traitors with little chance of returning home. Activists at home were instructed to demand so much from Russia that conciliation would thereby be made impossible.¹⁵⁶

The Activists at home tried to organize for action. Detachments masked as fire brigades were established in many localities and training meetings were held. Membership remained lower than hoped for, and arms there were none.¹⁵⁷ The Activists also hoped for co-operation with the Social Democrats, who were known to oppose the Provisional Government, but their different aims – political independence on the part of traditional Finland, or radical social reform on the other hand – made united efforts ever more difficult.

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In May, a few members of the Activist Delegation in Stockholm proposed to German representatives that Germany should invade Finland with a couple of army corps. Finns would eagerly join the invaders and the former officers of the Finnish national army could easily train two hundred thousand men to take part in the battle.

Ludendorff had no intention of invading Finland at this stage, but he encouraged the Activists to continue planning for a popular rising. He was preparing an attack, which then, at the beginning of September, was directed at Riga. A Finnish rebellion could have been useful to a certain degree in obstructing Russian countermeasures.¹⁵⁸

The Activists interpreted Ludendorff's encouragement as the promise of an imminent German expedition to Finland. Colonel Nikolai Mexmontan of the old Finnish army undertook to prepare a detailed plan for the new Finnish national army and its operation. According to the plan, the Jägers were to be landed on the coast of

155 Suomen vapauttamisen ulkomaanvaltuuskunta (The Delegation Abroad for the Liberation of Finland), kotelo 1, pöytäkirja 17. III. 1917, National Archives of Finland.

156 Suomen vapauttamisen ulkomaanvaltuuskunta, kotelo 2, Erich to the AK (Activist Committee) in March 1917, National Archives of Finland.

157 Gummerus, *Jääkärit ja aktivistit*, pp. 414–15, 454. The development of the Finnish armed organizations in 1917 has been thoroughly studied by Turo Manninen, "Järjestysvalta järkkyy", "Kaartit vastakkain", "Tie sotaan". *Itsenäistymisen vuodet 1917–1920*, vol. I, pp. 246–432.

158 Erwägungen über ein Vorgehen gegen die Ålandsinseln, Adm. St. 2. VII 1917. BA–MA RM 5/v 5205.

the Gulf of Bothnia to convene and train the liberation army, which would then advance southwards to chase the Russians out of the country.

The Stockholm Activist Delegation told the German agents that rebellion was to be expected very soon, and the agents seem to have supposed that Mexmontan's sketches were definite military plans and that the promised host of rebels was ready to act. The OHL ordered captured Russian rifles to be sent to Finland and the Jäger battalion was told that "soon the rumble will start". The commander of the battalion, Captain Eduard Ausfeld, planned to send small vanguard commandoes in submarines to prepare military actions and to cut communications between Finland and Russia. The big arms transport and the main group of Jägers were to follow on 10 September.

The Activists also drafted political plans. The attack would probably break up the Muscovite Empire, the fragments of which would form independent states, such as Estonia, Novgorod, the Ukraine, and Georgia. Finland had no force to liberate herself, but she had the right to independence because Finns were a separate nation, and it was in the German interest to help them. Finland would take part in the Great War on Germany's side and even after the war she would be a useful link in the chain of the Central Powers.¹⁵⁹

These plans reflected the pro-German and anti-Russian orientation of the Activists, but they had no practical importance, because the operations did not take place. At the last moment Mexmontan heard that no German landing was coming, and the German staffs learned that their agents in Stockholm had informed them incorrectly; as yet, the Activist organization existed mainly on paper, the few slightly armed 'fire brigades' excepted.

Had the attempt taken place, the result would probably have been catastrophic. Sending transports to the Finnish coasts would have been extremely dangerous. It is true that much of the Russian Baltic fleet was paralysed by revolution, but even a few gunboats could have destroyed unarmed transport ships, and an amateur revolt, though led by Jägers, could easily have been put down by the Russian troops in Finland. In spite of the revolution, the Russians would probably have defended themselves against aggression. Germany might have

¹⁵⁹ Memoranda by Mexmontan 9. VIII 1917, 28. VIII 1917; a memorandum by Edvard Hjelt 20.-25. IX 1917. The Mexmontan Collection, box 2, National Archives of Finland.

benefited from the incident, but the Finnish liberation movement would have suffered in a comparable manner to the Irish one in 1916.¹⁶⁰

The German Baltic fleet had not known of the planned operation and they had no intention of attacking Finland. The winter of 1916–17 had been long and hard and ice had covered the Baltic Sea, even in the south on the German coast. When the waters opened, the coastal flotilla guarded the Danish Straits as they had done during the previous summers. At the beginning of April, Admiral Hopmann steamed from Kiel to Libau with the *Kolberg*, *Augsburg*, *Strassburg*, and a flotilla of twenty-two torpedo boats and twelve submarines.

Prince Henry thought that these minimal forces would barely suffice for protecting German transports and blockading the enemy in its bases. No daring raids were to be made, only the minefields laid out in the previous years were to be completed. Fast escorts and minesweepers were all employed in the North Sea, and only converted fishing craft were left to carry on in the Baltic. The Russians did not lay down any new minefields in German passages, but the old ones had to be swept. Convoys were established for the ore transports from Sweden and on the Swinemünde–Libau route. More than four thousand passages were made and five million tons of iron ore were imported without loss.

The consequences of the revolution in the Russian Baltic fleet were closely observed. It was noticed that the sailor Soviets controlled Admiral Maksimov, "a dishonest climber, ready to join any political movement". The Russian fleet was in a state of demobilization, honest officers tried to save what they could, but it was not certain whether they would succeed. The flotilla on the Gulf of Riga was not as dissolute as the main battle fleet at Helsinki.¹⁶¹ Fighting continued in the Irben Strait, where the German and Russian coastal batteries faced each other, and where the *Slava* and *Grazhdanin* (previously *Tsesarevich*) with the cruiser *Baian* accompanied by a few destroyers

160 Lauerma, *Kuninkaallinen Preussin Jääkäripataljoona* 27, p. 767.

161 There is plenty of intelligence material in the German military archives from this time: BA–MA RM 5/v 4996, Politik Russlands, die russische Revolution, vom 14. März 1917 bis 30. Juni 1917; BA–MA RM 5/v Politik Russland, die russische Revolution, vom 15. September 1917 bis 19. November 1918; BA–MA RM 5/v 4065, Einfluss der revolutionären Bewegung in Russland auf den Kampfgeist der russischen Flotte, II 1917–31. XII 1917; BA–MA RM 5/v 4975, Tätigkeit der engl. Seestreitkräfte i. d. Ostsee, vom 17. April 1917 bis 19. Juli 1917.

and gunboats were active.

Thus the revolution had not paralysed the entire Russian Baltic fleet. The spies believed that "the nationalists led by Kerenski" were trying to maintain Russian domination on the Gulfs of Bothnia and Finland.¹⁶²

Finland out of the reach of the Western Powers

The French consul in Helsinki, Reynaud, was worried by the development of Finnish opinion. Activists, 'these few radical fanatics', were defying the Russian governmental policy, which was ridiculous but also dangerous. The German-inspired idea of independence was winning ground in the Grand Duchy, and because Finland was too weak to survive unsupported, she would fall under German tutelage and thus the Western Powers would be cut off from their contact with Russia. Reynaud proposed that Paris should try to oppose the German schemes in Finland lest the enemy got the country in its grip. Because Finns did not trust the promises of the Russian government, the Western Powers had to intervene.

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The consul was given small sums of money for anti-German propaganda, but it did not have much effect. There were people in Finland who understood that independence with German help would be difficult to attain and that such an attempt might provoke the lethal counter-measures of the Russian government. But left between the two Empires, the Finns could not pay much attention to the West, and Western-oriented Finns in the summer 1917 had no influence in the country and had to remain silent observers of the stormy history then being made.¹⁶³

The British were worried about the revolutionary Russian sailors selling their warships to the Germans. According to French information, there was discussion about buying the ships to prevent such an increase in the enemy strength, or sinking them, but neither intention was carried out.¹⁶⁴

162 BA-MA RM 5/v 4975, Nachrichten über die feindliche Flotte und Küstenbefestigungen.

163 Consular reports from Helsinki: Correspondence Politique, Russie Nouvelle Série nr 13 Guerre 1916-1918 Russie, vols. 707-710, Finlande I - IV, 12. mars 1915 - 15 febr 1918, Archives et documentation, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères.

164 M. Markku Järvinen has studied the French diplomatic reports from Petrograd and has kindly given me permission to refer to his studies here, based on: The

There were occasional scares in the German naval staffs about the Royal Navy avenging their losses in the submarine war with a raid on the Baltic, but, in fact, the British still had no wish to be trapped there. Only the British submarines were a constant nuisance to the Germans.

Preparations against a German landing in 1917

The Russian military and naval staffs feared that the Germans would undertake a landing in Finland as soon as the Baltic was free from ice. Petrograd was still defended in Finland by the 42nd Army Corps and by the fortresses of Peter the Great, Sveaborg, and Viipuri. In the beginning of the summer of 1917, there were 578 officers and 20,194 soldiers in Sveaborg, including about 10,000 men of the 128th Division – part of them on the land front to the north of Helsinki – and, in addition, about one hundred officers and five thousand men in the Turku-Åland Archipelago Position. The Naval Fortification of Peter the Great was still being constructed in Porkkala and on the islands off the coast, on the Estonian coast, and in Åland, although revolution slowed down the work, as did also the lack of Finnish currency on the Finnish side.¹⁶⁵ Nevertheless, of the twelve coastal batteries with their forty-one heavy guns, five batteries were completed in 1917 with sixteen cannon.¹⁶⁶ The entire garrison of the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great amounted, when at their most numerous in the summer of 1917, to about eighty thousand men, with the main mass on the Estonian side, but the numbers on the Finnish side (between Hanko and Porkkala) were not indicated separately.¹⁶⁷ The Baltic fleet was anchored at Helsinki, at times also at Lappohja (Lapvik) by Hankoniemi; light forces were in Reval and in the Gulf

French Ambassador in Petrograd to the Foreign Ministry, on 14 December 1917, Ministère des affaires étrangères, Archives diplomatiques, Guerre 1914–1918, Russie 660, dossier général.

165 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 1, delo 15, p. 107, Order of War Ministry 4. VIII 1917 to clear the books of all naval fortification works in Finland.

166 *Tri veka Rossiiskogo flota*, vol. II, p. 114.

167 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 1, delo 111, svedeniia o shtatakh i kolichestvennom sostave chastei sukhoputnykh voisk podchinennykh Komanduiushchemu flotom Baltiiskogo moria:

1. III	1917	1,775 officers	36,852 soldiers	2,760 non-combatants
1. VI	1917	2,156	79,013	8,778
1. VIII	1917	2,177	69,587	9,234

of Riga.¹⁶⁸

The navy had planned to fight from the island position of Turku-Åland with light forces on the flank of the enemy advancing towards the Gulf of Finland. The intention was to station in the archipelago the gunboats *Khivinets* and *Bobr* as well the cruisers *Rossia*, *Gromoboi* and *Diana*, supported by numerous submarines, torpedo boats, patrol boats plus minelayers and sweepers.¹⁶⁹ But no action was seen as no Germans approached.

Since December 1916, the 42nd Army Corps had been a detached corps, with all troops in Finland and the Viipuri fortress subordinated to its commander. The corps in turn was subordinated to the Northern Front or army group until September 1917, when the front staff was dissolved and the corps was subordinated to the Petrograd military district.

Although no German landing took place, the defenders could not be carefree. Spies heard that the Germans were preparing a popular rising in Finland in order to divert Russian forces from the main front.¹⁷⁰

The Northern front instructed the corps to prepare for defence, in the first instance on the line from the Kymijoki to Joensuu which had been a rear position but was now called the central position, and a new rear position was to be prepared from Viipuri to Lake Ladoga. The fortified forward western edge of the lake region could be defended if the situation should be exceptionally favourable.¹⁷¹

The commander of the 106th Division instructed his troops to prepare to oppose the enemy landing between Siipyy (Sideby) and Uusikaupunki (Nystad) and 'in case of need' to retreat towards Petrograd via Hämeenlinna and Viipuri. The chief of staff, in turn, instructed the troops to be careful not to provoke the local population, to gather their scattered small detachments in more concentrated masses in order to be safe, to improve guards and patrols and prepare for taking over telegraph offices and telephone exchanges and lines to secure communications between the different detachments.¹⁷² In

168 On the the disposition of the fleet in the winter 1916–1917, see appendix.

169 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 2, delo 3, Abo-Ålandskaia ukreplennaia pozitsiia 1915–1916 gg., p. 65, Plan kampanii na 1917 god.

170 RGVIA, fond 366, opis' 1, delo 115 o sredotochenii voisk v Finlandii v iun'e 1917 goda, p. 2 kopia telegrammy nashego voennago agenta v Parizhe 13. VI 1917.

171 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 32, SevFr – 42nd Army Corps 27. IV 1917.

172 *Suomen vapaussota vuonna 1918*, vol. III, p. 130 (The Finnish War of Liberation).

March 1917, the divisional strength was reported to amount to 247 officers, 27 doctors, 27 officials, 13,663 privates (of whom 1,713 were non-combatants or detached elsewhere, *na komandakh*), with more than two thousand horses.¹⁷³

In February an armoured train came to Finland, as well as the 4th and 28th Bicycle Companies of 526 men together, and the 42nd Motorcycle Detachment with thirty-nine men. The 40th Detached Sapper Battalion's strength was 1,259 men. The 2nd Detached Baltic Cavalry Brigade with 1,289 sabres was still positioned in south-western Finland to back up the coastal defence. It consisted of the 3rd Baltic Cavalry Regiment and 43rd Don Cossack Regiment. The Viipuri fortress was placed under the 42nd Army Corps, with its four fortress infantry battalions (3,640 bayonets), the fortress sapper company (252 men), 45th Sapper Battalion (446 men), and a mine company (312 men)¹⁷⁴ (artillery not mentioned), all of which were included in the 42nd Army Corps numbers. There were also the fourteen detached coastal batteries protecting the harbours of the Gulf of Bothnia as in 1916. Four more were planned, but do not seem to have received their guns before October 1917.

The 92nd Militia Brigade of 5,797 men guarded railways in the interior, and was not included in the army corps but was to be commanded by the corps commander in case of operations. In April, the 2nd and 172nd Reserve Infantry Regiments were reported at Hamina. Their troops had been constructing field fortifications in the central position in the lake district since 1916.¹⁷⁵ They disappeared from the report before the end of the month. In the interior, there were innumerable supporting rear establishments, magazines, detachments, commands and posts.¹⁷⁶

At the beginning of May, the reported strength of the 42nd Army Corps was 531 officers and 24,850 men, not including the border guard division. The 5th Caucasian Cossack Division with the 1st

173 RGVIA, fond 2421, opis' 2, delo 163, Svedeniia o boevom sostave, p. 58: 1. III 1917.

174 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 153, Boevoi sostav, boevoi rospisanie i obezpechenie vsemi vidami dovol'stvia, p. 137: 5. IV 1917.

175 The presence of a detachment of the 172th Regiment was reported from Kuopio in 1916: Kivick, *Venäläisten joukkojen majoittaminen Kuopioon 1910–1918*. (Quartermen Russian troops in Kuopio 1910–18; an unpublished MA thesis in the University of Tampere).

176 See appendix.

Caucasian Cossack, the 1st Taman Cossack Regiments and Cossack rifle detachment, in all 2,558 sabres and bayonets, was added to the strength 16 May.¹⁷⁷

The coasts were still guarded by the troops of the Detached Composite Border Guards Division of Finland, with its headquarters first in Helsinki, then transferred to Viipuri. It consisted of the First (Emperor Alexander III dropped from the title) Petrograd Border Guards Brigade's mounted regiments with their headquarters at Oulu, Vaasa, Pori and Turku, in all 1,628 sabres in May 1917, and the Finland Border Guard Brigade's foot regiments with their headquarters at Oulu, Kokkola and Vaasa, as well as at Kuokkala on the Karelian Isthmus, in all 6,877 bayonets.

The exact numbers given above must not be taken too seriously, because they changed from week to week, men fell ill and a few probably died in the hospitals, were ordered elsewhere, a few deserted, while, on the other hand, new recruits were brought in. The strength of the rear units, for example, the lines of communication (*etapnye*) detachments which were responsible for the railway transport of men from Russia to the detachments in Finland, the hospitals, the bakeries, the cattle detachments, were rarely included in the bayonet strength of the corps.

The Naval Fortress of Peter the Great, with fortifications in the archipelago of Turku-Åland and on the southern coast, and the fortress of Sveaborg, remained under the command of the Baltic fleet. The navy also strengthened its own rear positions and tried to create a new defence-line even further to the east at Lavansaari-Someri-Haapasaari.¹⁷⁸ As the position in Åland was too weak to close the Gulf of Bothnia, though minefields were laid in the navigation channels, the naval fortress staffs were always worried about the danger of a landing there, which could threaten their landward rear positions on the coast of Gulf of Finland. Not trusting the 42nd Army Corps, they tried to form a new line of defence towards the north from Hanko at Lohja-Inkoo, but deplored the lack of money and

177 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 153, Boevoi sostav, boevoi rospisanie i obezpechenie vsemi vidami dovol'stvie, p. 74: 12. II 1917; p. 84: 20. II 1917; p. 131: 27. III 1917; p. 155: 10. IV 1919; p. 163: 18. IV 1917; p. 184: 5. V 1917; p. 193: 12. V 1917; p. 203: 16. V 1917.

178 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 106, Perepiska s morskim vedomstvom i nachal'nikom Sveaborgskoi ukreplennogo raiona 1917, tha 42nd Army Corps to the Baltic fleet 6. I 1917; the Baltic fleet to the 42nd Army Corps 23. I 1917.

labour force for the purpose.¹⁷⁹

The parallel but independent preparations reveal a degree of mutual suspicion between the army corps and the navy. The significance of this suspicion was never to be tested in real battle because the Germans only arrived when the revolution had taken all fight out of both of services.

Orders were again given to organize sapper detachments for the destruction of all railway and harbour installations as well as stores and arms to prevent the enemy from capturing them.¹⁸⁰

The various reinforcements sent to strengthen the defence of Finland rapidly lost their fighting value and some of them remained here only for short periods. In the critical days of July and August, orders were given to the 45th Division with its 177th, 178th, 179th and 180th Regiments to take positions close to the Russian border at Perkjärvi; the 5th Caucasian Cossack Division was to stand by at Uusikirkko, and the 14th Cavalry Division was to station one of its regiments at Lappeenranta and send its Hussar Regiment to Helsinki and the Uhlans to Lahti.¹⁸¹ But the Provisional Government was losing its authority among the soldiers in the border country.

In September-October there was a discussion about evacuating the Åland garrison because of its conflicts with the local inhabitants.¹⁸²

179 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 106, Perepiska s morskim vedomstvom i nachal'nikom Sveaborgskoi ukreplennago raiona 1917, the Baltic fleet to the 42nd Army Corps 21. I 1917.

180 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 118, mery po podgotovke zhel. dor. linii po unichtozhenii.

181 The exact number of Russian soldiers and sailors remains uncertain. *Suomen vapaussota vuonna 1918*, vol. III, gives the number of 80,000 men, without citing their source. The often mentioned number of 100,000 soldiers and 25,000 sailors in August 1917 is an estimate based on the reports from Activist spies and retired Finnish officers, compiled by Mexmontan in Stockholm, and is mainly guesswork. The number of sailors has, of course, been even more of a puzzle, because ships kept coming and going. Juuso Manninen, in his unpublished and unfinished manuscript, Sota-arkisto T 19168/5, states that guessing the number was practically impossible because troops were frequently changed, and their soldiers were often sent home or escaped there. Ohto Manninen, "Venäjä Suomen sodassa", pp. 46–47, *Iisensäistymisen vuodet 1917–1920*, vol II, accepts the number of 124,500 soldiers and sailors, as does also Dubrovskaja, *Gel'singforskkii sovet deputatov armii, flota i rabochikh*, p. 20, as given by Rauanheimo, "Venäläiset joukot Suomessa maailmansodan aikana", p. 544–558, based on Juuso Manninen's manuscript. For a detailed catalogue of the Russian units in Finland in November 1917, see Annex.

182 RGVIA, fond 366, opisi 1–2, delo 115 Otnoshenie general-gubernatora Nekrasova Morskomu ministru Verderevskomu o vyvoze russkikh voisk s Ålandskikh

The construction of fortifications in Finland was stopped by the end of the summer of 1917, because the constructors had no Finnish currency left and the Finnish Senate did not grant them any more credits. It dawned on the Russians that the position of their forces might be uncertain in the country by the end of the war; officers and officials started evacuating their families from Finland.¹⁸³

Countering Finnish insubordination

The decision of the Finnish Diet to assume internal sovereignty was taken rather seriously by the Provisional Government. Kerenskii telegraphed to the Supreme Commander-in-Chief General Brusilov (who, in June 1917, had succeeded General Alekseev, Nicholas II's chief of staff) that the Finnish Diet had declared Finland independent and that a German landing was imminent.¹⁸⁴

Brusilov promised to send more troops to the threatened country from the 45th and 112th Infantry Divisions and the Don Cossacks. He supposed that these reinforcements would suffice to avert a German landing – presuming that they would do their duty; discipline was already very much of a problem. But he did not believe in a major German invasion, although a minor one might be attempted to aid the expected popular rising. The general categorically refused to grant political concessions to the Finns.¹⁸⁵

When Kerenskii succeeded in reorganizing the Provisional Government after the July crisis, he probably wanted to demonstrate his ability to restore order in Finland as well as in Russia. The reinforcements promised by Brusilov were to be used in disciplining the Finns when no German landing took place.

The idea was to concentrate the troops, which were until then scattered all around the country, in the region of the Helsinki–Petrograd railway, in accordance with the pre-war plans for internal disturbances in the border country. It is not quite clear what additional

ostrovov v sviazi s konfliktami s mestnymi zhiteliami.

183 Protokol zasedaniia komissii 13 iunia 1917 goda. Morskoi general'nyi shtab, fond 418 Morskogo krepostnogo soveta, delo Abo-Olandskaia positsiia, p. 14; Voennyi Inzhener Ivanov 6. IX 1917 Komanduiushchemu Baltiskim flotom, pp. 25 et seq. Tsentral'nyi Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Voenno-Morskogo Flota/ Microfilm NL 158, National Archives of Finland.

184 RGVIA, fond 366, opis' 1, delo 115, Kerenskii to Brusilov 11. VII 1917.

185 RGVIA, fond 366, opis' 1, delo 115, Brusilov to Kerenskii 11. VII 1917.

troops in fact arrived in Finland, because, for example, the promised 112th Division was hastily thrown into the main battle front,¹⁸⁶ and, in the beginning of August the Governor-General was again promised the swift arrival of the 14th Cavalry Division and one brigade of the 45th Infantry Division.¹⁸⁷ It seems that the 2nd Brigade of the 45th Division did arrive to Finland with its 179th Dünamunde and 180th Vindava Regiments, but only for a few weeks, because by the end of August it was no longer included in the report. In August, too, the 1st Cavalry Corps was included in the 42nd Army Corps. It consisted of the 14th Cavalry Division and of the 5th Cossack Division.¹⁸⁸ The 14th Division was one of the loyal troops which had put down the Bolshevik disorders in Petrograd in July.¹⁸⁹

The 42nd Army Corps was numerically at its strongest at the end of August 1917 with 38 battalions, 49 squadrons or sotnias, 1,195 officers, 6,449 sabres, 26,502 bayonets and 5,993 in detachments, 272 machine guns and thirty-six field guns.¹⁹⁰ At this time, the Border Guards Division amounted to 218 officers and 7,826 privates,¹⁹¹ the permanent Viipuri garrison (mine, sapper, communications detachments; the artillery garrison not mentioned) to seventeen officers and 678 privates, the 40th Sapper Battalion to thirty-two officers and 1,142 privates, and the 92th Militia Brigade to sixty-three officers and 2,523 men. These numbers are not complete, because they only count fighting units (*boevoi sostav*), not staffs and rear detachments.¹⁹²

186 RGVIA, fond 366, opis' 1, delo 115, Brusilov to Kerenskii 12. VII 1917.

187 RGVIA, fond 366, opis' 1, delo 115, the Petrograd military district to Governor-General 2/15. VIII 1917.

188 The 14th cavalry division: the 14th *Maloiarskii* Dragoons, the 14th *Iamburgskii* Uhlands, 14th Don Cossacks as well as a rifle regiment and the 13th Horse Artillery Battalion; 5th Cossack Division: 1st *Tamanskii* Cossacks, 1st Caucasian Cossacks, 3rd *Ekaterinodarskii* Cossacks, 3rd line (foot) Cossack regiment, Caucasian Cossack foot detachment, 4th Caucasian artillery battalion.

189 Knox, *With the Russian army 1014-1917*, vol. I, p. 136.

190 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 153, Boevoi sostav, boevoi rospisanie i obezpechenie vsemi vidami dovolstvie, p. 287: 19. VII 1917; p. 349: 27. VIII 1917. In the New Style, the dates are 1. VIII and 30. VIII.

The artillery of the corps was reported as consisting of over four hundred guns, but only thirty-six were field cannons, while the majority belonged to the fortress of Viipuri, most of them obsolete, even bronze cannons from the sixties, and numerous 6" – 42''' cannons of the 1877 model, but also four Japanese and two Russian 1909 model 11" coastal guns and two Japanese 9" mortars. RGVIA, fond 2292, opis' 1, Vedomost' o sostoianii vooruzhenii v kreposti Vyborga 2. XI 1917.

191 RGVIA, fond 4929, opis' 1, delo 23, Svedeniia o sostave i kolichestv chinov i loshadei. Shtab finliandsk. pogranych. okhrany, p. 267: 24. VII/7. VIII 1917.

Again, of the immobile batteries at the Bothnian harbours only the number of guns was given, not the number or men; there were eighteen batteries in November 1917, the oldest of which were armed with 6" or 42''' obsolete guns, but the newest batteries numbered from 12 to 18 had two to four light guns of the 1895 model.¹⁹³

The 43rd Don Cossack Regiment was also perhaps sent to Finland,¹⁹⁴ but is not mentioned in the reports of the 42nd Army Corps.

The 128th Division from Sveaborg was preparing positions on the mainland for the rear defence of the fortress, close to the main railway line from Hanko to Riihimäki and further eastwards.¹⁹⁵

Russo-Finnish conflict defused but internal tension grows

Minister State Secretary Enckell, the representative of the Finnish Senate in Petrograd, was worried about the Socialist takeover in Helsinki and opposed the Activists. He wanted to avoid a conflict with the Russian government, which had been reorganized after the July crisis; Enckell hoped that under Kerenskii the new government would be able to stop the fall of Russian society into revolutionary chaos. He easily persuaded Kerenskii to give up the military measures,¹⁹⁶ which had been implied in the Prime Minister's correspondence with Brusilov. Instead, the Diet could be dissolved, using the sovereign authority which the Provisional Government had inherited from the Emperor. In a manifesto on 31 July, the Provisional Government did declare inadmissible the unilateral usurpation of sovereign authority from the future constitutional assembly of Russia by the Finnish Diet, which was therefore dissolved,¹⁹⁷ an order which automatically implied new elections to be held after two months.

192 RG VIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 154, Boevoi sostav, boevoi rospisanie i obezpechenie vsemi vidami dovol'stvie l. XI – 31. XII 1917 goda, p. 2: 5./16. XI 1917.

193 RG VIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 154, p. 19: Svedeniia o boevom sostave chastei Upravlenii inspektora artillerieiu 42 AK, 9./22. XI 1917.

194 Polvinen, *Venäjän vallankumous ja Suomi*, vol. I, p. 94.

195 RG VIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 106, 42th army corps staff to Baltic fleet staff 27. VII 1917.

196 Enckell, *Poliittiset muistelmani*, vol. I, pp. 88–90.

197 Baryshnikov, "K.Enkel – pervyi predstavitel' nezavisimoi Finliandii v Petrograde." *Rossii i Finliandiia v XIX–XX vv; Istoriko-kulturnyi kontekst i lichnost'*, pp. 50–55.

Disregarding the order for dissolution, Kullervo Manner, the radical Social Democrat chairman of the Diet, convened a meeting of the deputies, but they were denied entrance to the meeting-hall by armed soldiers. The Russian Helsinki Soviet, with its Menshevik and SR majority, had decided to let the soldiers obey the Governor-General. Stakhovich found some troops among the recently arrived cavalry reinforcements who were still willing to obey orders.

For the last time, the Imperial army fulfilled its task of maintaining the integrity of the Empire against separatists. Its presence in the country, together with existence of the Baltic fleet, in spite of their 'democratization', had also prevented the enemy from seriously considering a landing during the summer.

The conflict revealed a many-sided web of contradictions. From the point of view of the Finnish Socialists and Activists, the Provisional Government had usurped the sovereign authority in Finland, in spite of the clearly expressed wish of the majority in the Diet. From the Russian point of view, the Provisional Government had only restored the authority of Russia over Finland, which had belonged to Russia since 1809. The moderate and cautious minority in the Diet deplored the irresponsible policy of the Socialists and Activists, because it ignored the apparently overwhelming Russian military force. Transferring sovereign authority to the Diet also threatened to concentrate all power in the hands of the Socialist majority in the Diet.

The Activists criticized the moderates for their co-operation with the Russian government. To the Social Democrats, what had happened seemed unpatriotic and smacked of a bourgeois class intrigue. Among them radical tendencies were growing and constitutional politics were discredited with the dissolution of the Diet. Finland's independence from bourgeois Russia began to seem vital for the Finnish workers' movement.¹⁹⁸

Enckell certainly exceeded his authority as Minister State Secretary, but as an adviser in Finnish questions to Kerenskii he successfully prevented an open armed conflict. Thereby he also used the Russian card or the 'Petrograd road' in internal Finnish politics for moderation and against Activist and Socialist adventurism.

198 *Uusi Päivä* 10. VIII 1917, 11. VIII 1917; Upton, *Vallankumous Suomessa*, vol. I, p. 234.

The co-operation between the non-Socialist and Socialist parties, which had started after the liberation from tsarism in the spring, ended. The six Social Democrat Senators left their offices,¹⁹⁹ and the six non-Socialist Senators continued in the rump Senate. Stakhovich was increasingly frustrated with his task²⁰⁰ and asked for permission to resign. He was replaced by the Leftist-Liberal Nikolai Vissarionovich Nekrasov on 17 September.

The break-up of the Senate reflected a continuing polarization in Finnish society. In the hot summer, social dissatisfaction had risen because of unemployment due to the cessation of exports to Russia and the stopping of fortification works. The dissatisfaction was sharpened by rising prices and the threat of hunger, because revolution and chaos had made imports from Russia impossible. Agricultural strikes in Finland had added bitter feelings to the fears. Mutual suspicion between the better-off and have-not classes sometimes boiled over into strikes, closures and conflicts.

The absence of military discipline caused increasing conflicts between Russian soldiers and Finnish officials and citizens. The consumption by the army of provisions also caused worry, as their supply from Russia grew ever more problematic, while one of the reasons for the Finnish social unrest was the threat of hunger.²⁰¹ During the summer complaints started arriving from different regions of Finland about the cost of living, lack of foodstuffs, and the unruly behaviour of the soldiers, as well as the reluctance of the local population to let either their homes or public buildings for quartering Russian troops.²⁰²

The army ceased to be the ultimate support of law and order in the border country which it had been since 1809. Housing, feeding, disciplining the troops, their participation in local politics, and their conflicts with Finns, caused continuous headaches for the Finnish Senate as well as for the Provisional Government and the military staffs and soviets. To the consternation of Finnish industrialists, strikes

199 Paavolainen, *Väinö Tanner*, pp. 124, 162–63.

200 Paavolainen, *Väinö Tanner*, p. 160.

201 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 143, perepiska s finliandskim general-gubernatorom i grazhdanskimi vlastiami Finliandii /42 armeiskii korpus, kvartirii komitet goroda Raumo komandaiushchemu 42 AK 8. IV 1917; a report from Seinäjoki 14. VII 1917.

202 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 143, perepiska s finliandskim general-gubernatorom i grazhdanskimi vlastaiami Finliandii.

and demonstrations could no longer be countered by military force, while, on the other hand, Finnish workers were surprised when Russian soldiers, the former oppressors, proved sympathetic to their movement and sometimes even joined demonstrating Finns and supported striking workers. The conduct of undisciplined soldiers and Finnish layabouts with their disorderly behaviour gave rise to increasingly nervous and alarming newspaper reports.

With the disappearance of tsarism, the Finnish police force, which had too conscientiously served the regime, had also dissolved spontaneously in March. Instead, volunteer home guards appeared to protect property, and workers' guards to protect meetings, demonstrations, and strikers. These civilian guards were not an effective police force, and even less an army, while the Senate's authority over them was minimal. The home guards and workers' guards suspected each other of planning violent activity against the opposite camp.

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In August, the troops had prevented the convening of the Finnish Diet, but when the Finnish Social Democrats decided again to defy the order of the Provisional Government, 20,000 soldiers and sailors held a demonstration and decided to "defend the Finnish democracy" against the Government. Nevertheless, "a serious problem for the revolution" in Finland was the fact that "due to the heritage of tsarism", in the words of Dubrovskaja, the historian of the Helsinki Soviet, the Russian and Finnish Social Democrats were separated by national feelings. The soviets and committees in Finland were mainly interested in the social and political problems in Russia and agitation among the Russian troops, while the Finns acted independently and only a few Left radicals welcomed Russian participation in local politics.²⁰³

At the beginning of October, elections were held to replace the dissolved Diet. With the revived interest in politics, and as a reaction against the social unrest, the non-Socialist parties won 108 seats in the Diet, leaving 92 for the Socialists. Though the Social Democrats were still by far the biggest party in the Diet, the result was a bitter defeat for them, because they had been used to seeing their strength constantly increasing, having risen from eighty deputies in 1907 to 103 in 1917, and because they had grown accustomed to regarding other parties as a united bourgeois opponent. Their disappointment increased the radical tendencies in the labour movement.

203 Dubrovskaja, *Gel'singforskii sovet...* p. 155.

When the workers' guards, soon to be called Red Guards, were seen fraternizing with the Russian soldiers, the Activists lost their desire for co-operation with the Social Democrats. On the other hand, the home guards and their conservative mentors realized that expelling the Russians was the only possible means of securing life, property and social order in the country. The fire brigades and home guards started combining into a White Guard.

As yet, only the Russians had arms.

German moves in the Baltic towards the north-east

During this time, the Germans had moved closer to Finland. When the summer of 1917 passed and Russia still seemed inclined to continue the war, Ludendorff decided to give the Provisional Government a further push. At the beginning of September Riga was taken, and because the conquest was easy, the OHL decided to continue the offensive in order take up positions for advancing on Petrograd after the winter. The Russian fleet was to be chased out of the Gulf of Riga and the islands of Saarenmaa (Ösel) and Hiidenmaa (Dagö) were to be seized. This was a welcome chance for the German navy to do something worthwhile and to counter the inactivity which had led many sailors into disobedience. "A succesful operation was necessary to restore popular confidence in, and enthusiasm for, the navy".²⁰⁴ Ships from the North Sea and Baltic Sea fleets were formed into a *Flottenverband für Sonderunternehmung*, a naval detachment for special operations, under Vice Admiral Schmidt, and the army operations were to take place under the 8th Army command at Riga. Eleven battleships were transferred from the North Sea to silence the Russian coastal batteries and to fend off eventual counterattack by the *Gangut*-class dreadnoughts.²⁰⁵

The operation started on 11 October 1917, the landing on the islands was successful, and co-operation between the army and navy went well. The defenders had no fight left in them, twenty thousand

204 Scheer, *Deutschlands Hochseeflotte im Weltkrieg*, pp. 412, 416–22.

205 Battlecruiser *Moltke* and battleships *König*, *Bayern*, *Grosser Kurfürst*, *Kronprinz*, *Markgraf*, *Friedrich der Grosse*, *König Albert*, *Kaiserin*, *Prinzregent Luitpold*, and *Kaiser*; with one cruiser and 27 torpedo boats from the North Sea, 5 cruisers and 24 torpedo boats from the Baltic, 99 minesweepers, 99 anti-submarine craft, 6 submarines, 6 airships, 100 aeroplanes, 19 troopships, 20 transports for munitions, coal freighters, a victuals transport, oil tankers, water tankers, and hospital ships.

of them surrendered, while the Germans lost four hundred men. No *Ganguts* were seen, only the old *Slava* tried to oppose the German dreadnoughts in the Moon Sound and was bombarded out of battle, as were also the British submarines, only one of the three in the Riga Gulf managing to escape to Hanko. The greatest problem turned out to be minesweeping in the stormy and dark autumn weather, with Ludendorff pressing the admirals for speedy action. SMSs *Grosser Kurfürst*, *Bayern* and *Markgraf* were damaged by mines and had to be towed back to Kiel. The other battleships returned to the North Sea on 27 October.

Thus the Germans mastered the Gulf of Riga, from where Finland could be easily reached, but further operations were interrupted by the approaching winter. All ships were withdrawn from the eastern Baltic and only a detachment left under steam at the western end of the sea to secure the Danish Straits.

Military dissolution

After the defeat of Brusilov's summer offensive and the consequent disorders, General Kornilov had been appointed commander-in-chief with the idea that he would restore military discipline and internal order. The attempt failed on 12/25 September, because Kerenskii did not trust Kornilov, and because the general's troops did not obey him. As a reaction, the current of public opinion shifted to the Left again. The Bolsheviks, banned as traitors in July, now gained the majority in the Soviets of many cities; the most important was the Petrograd Soviet, where Trotskii was chosen chairman.

An immediate reaction was seen in Viipuri. The garrison of the fortress organized a 'swimming school' for their officers: the commander of the 42th Corps Oranovskii and twenty-five others were pushed off the bridge and shot in the water. "Owing to its proximity to 'revolutionary Petrograd' and to the evil influence of the Baltic Fleet ... discipline on the Northern Front deteriorates more rapidly than elsewhere", the British military attaché Major General Sir Alfred Knox wrote.²⁰⁶

The murders of the officers by sailors in March or in September were not organized by the Bolshevik party, they were sudden bursts

206 Knox, *With the Russian army 1914–1917*, vol. II, p. 594.

of spontaneous rage. The success of the Bolsheviks was due to the fact that Lenin, irrespective of any Marxist theories, understood what the people wanted and was radical enough to promise to fulfil their wishes. The dissatisfaction, hatred and rage could thus be funnelled into support for the party, enabling the Bolsheviks to subject the country for decades. Happily for Finns, the sailors and soldiers were not angry with the Grand Duchy, but with the regime at home in Russia.

The big Russian army in Finland was strong only in numbers. The commander of the Baltic fleet, Rear Admiral A.V. Razvosov (after Maksimov and Verderevskii – the revolution consumed commanders fast), the new commander of the 42nd Army Corps Lieutenant General Parkhomov, and Governor-General Nekrasov, who had succeeded Stakhovich in September, agreed that the first necessity was to get rid of the 106th Division, because it was completely useless for battle and specially hated by the population. Instead, Nekrasov demanded a Cossack division, two regiments of which were needed immediately.²⁰⁷ The 128th Division, from the garrison of the naval fortress, also had a bad influence even on the Cossacks, making them and others still loyal lose their discipline.²⁰⁸

The difficult situation was reflected in the bickering of the Russian authorities with each other. Governor-General Nekrasov complained that Admiral Razvosov was reluctant to take any action towards liquidating Bolshevik domination and was sceptical about all measures for strengthening governmental authority. In his opinion, the army commanders were only fit to be dismissed and replaced as soon as possible. Perhaps it was best to concentrate all military authority in the hands of the commander of Sveaborg, the 42nd Army Corps included, to which post a man who would be reliable and able to co-operate with Nekrasov should be appointed. The reply he received was that the army corps could not be put under naval fortress commandants, but that unfit commanders would be relieved. Also the unruly troops had already received the order to leave the country, but the committees and Soviets were reluctant to obey.²⁰⁹

207 TsGAOR, fond 1778, opis' 1 delo 273, Nekrasov to Kerenskii, razbor shifrovannykh telegrammov iz Gel'singforsa, podana 18. IX, poluchena 19. IX.

208 RGVIA, fond 366, opis' 1, delo 115, Governor-General to Ministry of Marine 4/17. IX 1917.

209 RGVIA, fond 366, opis' 1, delo 115, Glavkoverkh 2. IX 1917.

After the loss of the Estonian islands, the Russian staffs were increasingly worried about renewed defeat and the disobedient and undisciplined troops. The Stavka tried to make the Ist, Vth, XIIth and XIIIth Armies as well as the Baltic Sea naval forces and the Naval Fortress of Peter the Great tighten up their measures for the defence of Petrograd after the loss of the islands,²¹⁰ while the defeated and demoralized troops escaped from the Gulf of Riga.²¹¹ Desperately, the commanders tried to make the army more reliable by ordering the innumerable superfluous staffs and undisciplined rear detachments to be dissolved.²¹² The XIIth Army was to be responsible for the defence of Reval on the land side, while the 42nd Army Corps had to defend the Uusimaa *guberniia*, i.e. the northern land side of the naval fortresses.²¹³

The naval fortress commander protested, because the 42nd Corps was already transferring its headquarters and also as many of its scattered troops as it was able to move towards Viipuri, leaving open the land side of the naval fortress,²¹⁴ while no help could be expected from the Estonian side nor could any help, even if sent, reach the northern side of the Gulf before an interval of three or four weeks, in which time the enemy would have already occupied Finland.

The naval land forces leadership still regarded the fortress of Sveaborg as satisfactorily fortified and manned with its fortress infantry.²¹⁵ More effort should have been made at Hanko, but now there was no money for any additional works. There still was the

210 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 1, delo 6, telegrammy Glavnomanduiushchego severnym frontom s prikazam sukhoputnym voiskam prikrivat' podstup k Reveliu i uderzhivat' zaniamaemyia pozitsii, v sviazi s vysadki nemtsev na ostrovah Ezel i Gange (sic! ought to be Dage), 6.-16. X 1917.

211 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 1, delo 6, telegram 8. X, pp. 7, 13.

212 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 1, delo 6, pp. 15-27, telegrams in October to several troops and staffs of the Northern Front.

213 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 1, delo 6, pp. 31-35, telegrams to the XIIth army and 42nd Corps 20. XI 1917.

214 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 1, delo 6, p. 37, telegram of the naval fortress staff to the Northern Front.

215 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 1, delo 172, Svedeniia o sostoianii chinov i chastiakh voisk, podchinennykh komanduiushchemu Baltiiskogo Moria... p. 249 Sveaborgskoi krepost' 5/18. X 1917: 332 officers, 33 doctors, 9,233 soldiers, 1,883 non-combatants. All the land troops subordinated to the Baltic fleet numbered nominally (*po shchitu*) 1,052 officers, 116 doctors, 270 officials, and 40,104 soldiers with 3,700 non-combatants, but in fact numbered only 680 officers, 86 doctors, 191 officials and 20,096 soldiers with 1,918 non-combatants 1/14. X 1917.

128th Infantry Division on the land front of the Sveaborg fortress, with the 428th *Lodeinopoleinyi* infantry regiment on the left flank at Hanko, and the 3rd Kuban Cossack Regiment in support. On Åland were the Åland battalion and the officers' school rifle regiment, but the island position should have had one or two additional regiments supported by artillery and even cavalry, and Sveaborg's land front needed three more infantry divisions which were, however, not available – on the contrary, the 128th Division was without an artillery brigade, its numbers were under strength,²¹⁶ and it refused to occupy its positions on the front as ordered.²¹⁷ It is not quite clear what "satisfactory" meant in the situation described.

The 29th Division of the 20th Army Corps was transferred to Finland.²¹⁸ In September, the 114th Novogorod and 115th Viazma Regiments arrived in Helsinki with their 1,766 and 2,092 soldiers;²¹⁹ and in December the 113th Starogub, the 115th Viazma and the 116th Maloiarsk Regiments were stationed at the Sveaborg fortress area, in all 499 officers, 8,756 soldiers and 1,137 non-combatants. The 114th Regiment and the 129th Strike Battalion were not included in the Sveaborg numbers; they probably stayed somewhere on the land front, perhaps at Lahti, but were subordinated to the fortress commander.²²⁰

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- 216 The nominal strength of a regiment was 74 officers and 3486 men 'in the line' with 264 non-combatant men, but the actual numbers of the 128th division regiments were in October:

the 509th Gzhatsk Regiment	64 officers	1,563 in line	173 non-combatants
the 510th Volkhov	59	1,328	153
the 511th Sychno	73	1,279	240
the 512th Desna	52	1,486	150

the 428th Lodeinopole Regiment, of the 107th Division, was far from full strength, but better:

54	2,083	233
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the Vladivostok mine battalion was at about half its nominal strength (number under the stroke):

15/35	329/640	25/49
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Only the 3rd Ekaterinodar Cossack Regiment was close to its nominal strength:

27/26	711/936	68/93
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RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 1, delo 172, Svedeniia o sostoianii chinov i chastiakh voisk, podchinnennykh komanduiushchemy Baltiiskogo Moria... p. 249.

- 217 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 1, delo 6, p. 39, telegrams from the Baltic fleet to the Northern Front.
- 218 The 29th division was transferred from the battlefield to the rear in August 1917, and their archive does not contain any documents later than that, RGVA fond 2359, but their appearance in Finland was duly recorded by the staff of the land forces of the naval fortress, v. following notes.
- 219 1'787 and 1'495 under nominal strength.

Military plans and orders were increasingly futile. Officers had no authority left, and even moderate socialists lost their influence among the soldiers and sailors, while the Bolsheviks, Left Socialist Revolutionaries, Internationalist Mensheviks, Anarchists and other radicals formed a Left majority in the local soviets and committees. By the end of September, practically all the troops were out of the government hands. The Bolshevik leaders Ivan Smilga of the *Oblast'* committee, Pavel Dybenko of the *Tsentrobalt* and Pavel Shishko of the Helsinki Soviet formed a *troika* or triumvirate whose influence was great among the troops and who did not allow their use for counter-revolutionary purposes.²²¹

Finnish-Russian discussions

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Kerenskii, having lost support on the Left and on the Right, tried to survive on an ever narrowing basis. He declared Russia a republic on 17/30 September, but the gesture had no concrete meaning, and in Finland it was not noticed at all.

For the Finns, the situation in Russia seemed extremely uncertain; anarchy appeared as probable as a tsarist restoration. In order to secure Finnish autonomy as far as possible, the rump Senate asked for certain sovereign rights to be transferred to them from Petrograd. In his desperate situation, during the Kornilov debacle, Kerenskii gave the Finnish Senate the authority to issue decrees, to make decisions on establishing or disestablishing government offices, and to decide questions concerning the university, schools and the church. But the Russian sovereign, who- or whatever that might be, was to appoint the Governor-General and Senators, to convene and dissolve the Diet, and to confirm the laws and budgets.

The agreement fulfilled only the minimal demands of the Finns, and the paper was far from a constitution, being only a document signed by Kerenskii, who saw himself compelled somehow to pacify the border country.

In Finnish historiography, it has been customary to classify the Provisional Government as equivalent to its tsarist predecessor because it did not admit the complete internal autonomy of Finland,

220 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis' 1, delo 14, p. 14 prikaz sukhoputnym voiskam Baltiiskogo moria 17. XI 1917.

221 Dubrovskaja, *Gel'singforskii sovet...* pp. 160–61.

which to the Finns seemed legal, necessary and well-founded.

The constitutional committee set up by the Diet to prepare the definite constitution for Finland, manned by cautious constitutionalists, tried to find an agreement acceptable both to the Russian government and to the Finns. This was no longer due to any great loyalty to Russia, but mainly to the fact that the moderates still did not consider Finland strong enough to decide her fate unilaterally. The committee explained that, as always since 1809, the complete internal sovereignty of the border country would be the best guarantee for the military security of the north-west border of the Empire. They wanted a signed constitution and an elected Finnish head of government to convene and dissolve the Diet and to confirm its decisions. Questions of common interest were to be discussed in a Russo-Finnish mixed committee on the basis of an identical proposal for each parliament, and cases of discord were to be referred to the International Court at the Hague. Foreign policy and military questions were to be handled by the Russian government.

In October, a Russian delegation of international law specialists stated that a Finnish President, separate from an all-Imperial head of state, was inadmissible, and that Finland could only be allowed local autonomy, and that changes in its constitution were to be confirmed by the Russian government.²²² The Russian lawyers still thought that Finland was part of an indivisible Russian Empire and that its position was to be determined by the sovereign Russian power.

While the question of Finland's position was being discussed with the Russian government, the internal quarrel among the Finns grew. Socialists grumbled because they had lost their *coup* to attain sovereign power, the men of independence did not like the idea of giving the Russians too much say in Finnish affairs, and the Activists did not accept the need for any discussions with the Russians.

The Russian delegation, rather than conceding Finnish demands, would have let the Finns take by force what they liked, because such unilateral, illegal measures could later be annulled by superior force, while voluntary concessions might prove irrecoverable.²²³

Nekrasov still hoped to oppose with military force the Finnish strivings for separation. Because of the close relations between the

222 Idman, *Maamme itsenäistymisen vuosilta* (The Memoirs of I.), pp. 165, 169.

223 TsGAOR, fond 1789, opis' 1, delo 29 iuridicheskago soveshchaniia pri Vr. Pr., Delo o Finliandii, 15. X 1917.

Finnish Socialists and the Bolsheviks, additional troops could not be transported straight to Helsinki. Nekrasov planned that loyal Cossacks should be brought by train to Hämeenlinna, Riihimäki and Lahti, from where they could easily ride to Helsinki, while the unreliable 128th Division should be sent away across the Gulf to Reval. Nekrasov also asked for four armoured cars; it was a small detachment, but if reliable, very useful for decisive action when necessary.²²⁴ But he was not able to get any support from the army; on the contrary, the Bolsheviks did not allow the 128th Division to obey the order to leave.²²⁵

For their part, the Finnish Senate was still cautious, because they feared that illegal and unilateral means could easily lead to anarchy and revolution. But they were ever more eager to get as free as possible from the increasingly disorderly and dangerous Russian power. In negotiations that were destined to be the last between the rump Senate and the Kerenskii government, it was agreed that the Provisional Government was to give a declaration of desisting from use of the sovereign authority in Finland, that the chairman of the Diet would acknowledge the declaration, and that the Senate would take over the supreme power. Foreign policy and military questions were to remain in the Russian sphere, and Russian consent would be requested for legislation which affected military interests or the rights of Russians in Finland. Nekrasov and Enckell boarded the night express train to Petrograd in the evening of 6 November 1917 to bring the paper to Kerenskii for signature.²²⁶

The numbers of Russian troops decreased from the maximum reached in August, but only slowly. After the 45th Division's battalions left in the beginning of September, there remained twenty-six battalions and forty-nine squadrons in the 42nd Army Corps, then on 25 October/ 7 November the Viipuri fortress regiments were no longer reported, and also the Lodeinopole Regiment soon disappeared,²²⁷ so that only twenty battalions and forty-nine squadrons

224 TsGAOR, fond 1778, opis' 1, delo 273, Nekrasov to Kerenskii 19. IX 1917, Petrograd to Nekrasov 20. IX 1917.

225 Dubrovskaja p. 154.

226 For the history in more detail, see: Luntinen, *Itsenäisyyspäättös kypsyy, Irti Venäjästä, Itsenäistymisen vuodet 1917-1920*, vol. I, pp. 194-243.

227 The Viipuri garrison had been transferred to the Northern Front as a punishment for their participation in the murder of their officers. Knox, *With the Russian army 1914-1917*, vol. II, pp. 688-89. The 428th *Lodeinopoleinyi* Regiment and

remained.²²⁸ By the beginning of January the cavalry had been reduced to nineteen squadrons, and by 21 January there remained only eighteen and a half battalions.

NUMBER OF MEN IN THE 42th ARMY CORPS

date	officers	sabres	bayonets	non-combatants and detached personnel (v <i>komandakh</i>)
11/24.VIII	1,173	6,451	26,848	5,789
5/18 X 1917	684	6,143	19,033	3,845
23.XII/5.I	487	2,282	14,128	3,017
8/21. I 1918	482	2,184	9,436	2,745

In addition to the 42th Army Corps, there remained in Finland the border guards, the militia *druzhiny* and the soldiers and sailors of the Baltic fleet. In the middle of January 1918 there seem to have been about seventy-thousand soldiers and sailors in the country.²²⁹

a few Baltic sailors, about two thousand men in all, were ordered by the Petrograd Revolutionary Military Committee to aid the Bolshevik coup in Moscow on 2/15 November 1917. *Tri veka rsooiiskogo flota*, vol. II, p. 137.

228 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 153, Boevoi sostav, boevoi rospisanie i obezpechenie vsemi vidami dovol'stvie, p. 434: 12/25. X 1917.

229 O. Manninen, "Venäjä Suomen sodassa", *Itsenäistymisen vuodet 1917-1920*, vol. II, pp. 46-47; Tanskanen, *Venäläiset Suomen sisällissodassa vuonna 1918*, pp. 16-17. I have not found any sources in the RGVIA or RGAVMF to confirm the numbers, nor any reason to doubt them.

Imperial Rivals

FROM THE RUSSIAN TO THE GERMAN EMPIRE

The German appetite grows

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By the beginning of November 1917 winter was coming and cold, hunger and death threatened the Russians, with no hope of help from Kerenskii's government. With their promises of peace and bread, the Bolsheviks had acquired the support of soldiers and workers, and by allowing the requisitioning of manorial lands by the peasants, at least the temporary neutrality of the peasants had been obtained. The Bolshevik party had won a majority in the city Soviets, while the moderate socialists were only afraid of a rightist counter-revolution and not able to imagine any danger from the Left.

On 25 October/7 November 1917, Red Guards and sailors swept away the Provisional government and, led by Lenin, the Council of People's Commissars started constructing Socialism in Russia. To make true the promise of peace, negotiations with the Germans were started at Brest-Litovsk.

Germany demanded a broad area in southern and western Russia as well as the Baltic provinces. The OHL hoped to be able to recruit big new units from the region,¹ and their intention was to transform the provinces into separate German duchies with close economic and military ties with Prussia. No concessions to local national feeling were to be admitted.² The Imperial navy considered the possession of

1 Army corps A from Estonia, B from Livonia, C from Courland, D from northern Lithuania, E from central Lithuania and F from southern Lithuania, each corps to consist of two divisions.

2 Ausw. Amt 23. IX 1918. BA-MA RM 5/v 3597 Verträge mit den Baltenländern, Gr.H.Qu. 22. VI 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 4648 Marine Konvention (Baltenländern). The German eastern war aims have been discussed by Fischer, *Deutsche*

the Baltic provinces necessary for German domination on the Baltic Sea and for the economic exploitation of Russia, Finland and Scandinavia. Prince Henry and his staff also considered that the possession of the Baltic provinces was vital for German naval interests in the Baltic sea.³

The Germans' appetite was growing the more they found Russia weakening. Finland was also involved in their plans, though as yet no definite decision had been made. The local political development in the north worked to the German advantage.

Problems on the way to the north

Germany still had problems with Sweden. In 1917, the shift in opinion towards the Left throughout Europe could be perceived even in Stockholm. In the autumn, the Conservative government was replaced by a Left Liberal and moderate Social Democrat government. Sweden started to limit ore transports to Germany, and Swedish ships were allowed to carry Entente goods on the oceans.

The German Foreign Office heard rumours that Britain had promised Åland to Sweden as a reward for joining the war on the Entente side. Perhaps, after all, the archipelago should be occupied to thwart such schemes; from Åland, Finland could be drawn closer to Germany, which, in turn, might prevent Sweden from moving too far to the side of the enemy. Ludendorff himself was also worried about British influence in Norway and Sweden, and he, too, believed that Germany's loss of influence could be made good with the conquest of Åland. He supposed that one battalion of pioneers (sappers) would suffice to conquer the islands.⁴

The German Admiralty staff was especially worried about the transport of war materials from the West via Scandinavia to Russia, which would grow if Sweden should join the enemy. From a base on

Kriegsziele, Revolutionierung und Separatfrieden im Osten, 1914 bis 1918; Zeman, *Germany and the Revolution in Russia 1915-1918*; Volkmann, *Die deutsche Baltikumpolitik zwischen Brest-Litowsk und Compiègne*; S. Zetterberg, *Die Liga der Fremdvölker Russlands 1916-1918*; Bohn, *Deutsche Kriegsziele im Ostseeraum im Ersten Weltkrieg*.

3 Heinrich Prinz von Preussen 17. III 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 4467.

4 Kühlmann to State Secretary von Lersner 29/30. IX 1917; Stüttzing, Stockholm to AA 9. X 1917; Steinwachs drahtet aus Stockholm 1. XI 1917, OHL forwarded to the Admiralty staff. BA-MA RM 5/v 5205.

Åland, the German navy hoped to be able to interdict the transit traffic.

But there were always the practical problems of sending transport ships on unswept seas and landing on a distant coast. Supplying the attacking force also remained a headache, but now, if the army should advance to the Baltic provinces, the ships could steam along the Estonian coast to the north even if Swedish bases were not available for them.⁵

Then the Bolsheviks took over in Russia and further advance to the east was interrupted when peace talks were started with them in December 1917.

The Soviet delegation was reluctant to discuss any concessions to the Germans as they expected that Lenin's peace manifesto would make the peoples of the Central Powers rise against their militarist governments.

People in the states and armies of the Central Powers were war-weary; indeed, a few mutinies took place, and some talk was heard of a peace without annexations and reparations. But Ludendorff's military regime was strong enough to suppress all opposition for a while. With Russia defeated, it seemed possible to obtain Germany's war aims in the east and to transfer the army to the west for a final decisive attack.

The Russians were reluctant to concede the German demands, but also unable to continue the battle. In January 1918, Trotskii left Brest-Litovsk, declaring that the war had ended even if no peace was signed. This was nonsense to the Germans and they started advancing to the east on 18 February 1918.⁶ "There is no other way, otherwise the thugs will beat the Ukrainians, Finns and Balts, raise a revolutionary army, and cover all Europe with their beastliness (*Schweinerei*)".⁷

The advance was easier than expected, "the Russian army had degenerated worse than anyone had supposed, no one wants to fight us".⁸ The Germans liberated the Ukraine and took White Russia,

5 Vertreter des Admiralstabes bei OHL 3. IX 1917; Beurteilung einer Unternehmung gegen die Aalandsinseln im jetzigen Zeitpunkt 4. IX 1917; Albionunternehmen 12. X 1917; Überlegungen über ein Vorgehen gegen die Aalands-Inseln im Anschluss an die Einnahme von Ösel und Moon 12. X 1917. BA-MA RM 5/v 5205.

6 Starting from February 1918, the Bolsheviks adopted the Gregorian calendar.

7 *Die Aufzeichnungen des Generalmajors von Hoffman*, vol. II, p. 185.

8 *Die Aufzeichnungen des Generalmajors von Hoffman*, vol. II, p. 223.

occupied Lithuania, Livonia and Estonia, and marched into Reval on 25 February). Bolshevik revolutionaries were pushed back to Russia, and local national independence movements were suppressed. Ludendorff was prepared to continue operation *Fangstoss* to Petersburg⁹ and Moscow should the Bolshevik government persist in its obstruction. The terms of peace were reasonable and moderate, in his opinion.¹⁰

To save his regime, Lenin induced his colleagues to consent to all annexations Germany demanded. Peace was signed at Brest-Litovsk on 3 March 1918. Ludendorff was able to transfer part of his armies to the west, but substantial numbers of troops had to stay in the east to occupy the liberated countries.

The German Baltic fleet took over Libau for a naval base and fortress, and Reval was made a base for minesweepers and submarines, while other Baltic fortresses were occupied by the German army.

Nevertheless, the war against Britain remained the first task of the High Seas fleet, and securing the Baltic Sea against eventual British attack remained the main task of the Baltic fleet. For the sailing season of 1918, a few ships only could be detached to the eastern Baltic Sea to sweep mines, convoy transports, and protect German harbours.¹¹

At this time the Finns had finally decided to break away from Russia, while as a side-effect of the Russian revolution, a civil war had also broken out in the country.

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Finland divided and detached from Russia

On the morning of 7 November 1917 at the border station of Valkeasaari/Beloostrov, Enckell and Nekrasov learned that the Kerenskii regime no longer existed. All the discussions about defining Finland's position in the Russian State had been in vain.

The Bolsheviks very much hoped for a revolution in Finland, too,

9 The German-sounding 'Sankt-Peterburg' was changed to 'Petrograd' in 1914, and the chauvinist-sounding name back to 'Peterburg', without 'Sankt', by the Bolsheviks in 1918; in 1924 the city was named after Lenin and in 1991 renamed 'Sankt-Peterburg'.

10 Ludendorff, *Kriegführung und Politik*, p. 283.

11 Documents on the discussions and plans concerning the Baltic Sea and Baltic provinces are in the *Verträge mit den Baltenländern*, BA-MA RM 5/v 4648; *Marine Konvention (Baltenländer)* BA-MA RM 4648; Oesel, Baltische Gewässer 1. XI 1917 – 30. IX 1918.

first in order to secure their precarious position in Petersburg against counter-coups from the northwest, and then to spread the world revolution further to Scandinavia and Germany.

Finland seemed ripe for revolution. Finnish society had its centuries-old structure inherited from the Swedish period and developed during the period of autonomy. It was a rather well-ordered and basically viable society, but under stress by the rapid growth of population and modernization. It was not able to absorb the immense pressure of the Great War and the quick changes of the Russian revolution rapidly enough to avoid a violent crisis. There was unemployment and a threat of hunger, wartime difficulties infected old social problems, and the defeat of the Social Democrats in the elections in October, in addition to the Bolshevik example, strengthened radical tendencies. The loss of the legitimate authority of the Grand Duke, and the dissolution of the public forces of order – the police and the army – caused a vacuum where the Right and the Left factions competed for power, polarizing into the Whites and Reds, deeply suspicious of each other.¹²

The Russian 42nd Army Corps as well as the militia brigade and border guards division remained in Finland, but they were losing all vestiges of discipline, and the Bolsheviks were in a majority in all the Soviets. A few thousand soldiers from the 422nd and 424th Regiments¹³ and Baltic Fleet sailors with a few warships¹⁴ were ordered to Petrograd to defend the people's regime against counter-revolution, and the 428th Lodeinopole Regiment went to help the Bolsheviks in Moscow¹⁵. The majority of the soldiers were probably not eager to fight for revolution, though they voted for the Bolsheviks because of Lenin's promise of peace and land.¹⁶

12 Holodkovskii, *Suomen työväen vallankumous 1918*, p. 93 (The Finnish Workers' Revolution), Polvinen, *Venäjän vallankumous ja Suomi*, vol. I, p. 121 (The Russian Revolution and Finland); Rinta-Tassi, "Lokakuun vallankumous ja Suomen itsenäistyminen", p. 111. (The October Revolution and Finland); Haapala, *Kun yhteiskunta hajosi* (When Society Breaks Down).

13 RGVA, introduction to fond 2421, 106-i pehotnaia diviziia: on the demand of the the Finland *oblast* committee and Petrograd revolutionary committee the 422nd Kolpino regiment and two companies of the 424th regiment were sent to fight fight counterrevolution 28 October/10 November 1917.

14 The torpedo boats *Metkii*, *Zabiiaka*, *Samson* and *Deiatel'nyi* with 1,800 sailors from the battleships. Dubrovskaja pp. 164–65.

15 *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota*, vol. II, p. 137.

16 It is, however, an exaggeration to say that the army corps in Finland was vitally

The Finnish worker's leaders formed a revolutionary central committee on 9 November/28 October to support the Russian revolution and to start one of their own. However, many leaders hesitated. They knew that the workers had much to lose besides their chains; victory was uncertain and revenge was certain if the revolution were to be defeated. They believed that the bourgeoisie would be aided by the Germans, while Russian support for them was far from assured. In order somehow to support the Russian revolution they decided to start a general strike.¹⁷

The Russian army corps was not officially involved in the Finnish strike. The *oblast'* (regional, i.e. of all Russians in Finland) committee and the Helsinki Soviet decided only to observe what was happening, the Tsentrobalt ordered sailors to keep to their ships, and the 42nd Army Corps decided only to defend themselves if the bourgeoisie should attack. Nevertheless, the Finnish Red Guards were given a few thousand military rifles, to be taken back after the strike.

The new Finnish Diet, with its non-Socialist majority of 108 to 92 Social Democrats, had convened and discussed the problem of the sovereign power in Finland. For the bourgeois leaders it was unthinkable to regard the Bolshevik Peoples' Commissars as the sovereign ruler of the Grand Duchy. Since the Social Democrats had lost their majority, it was now possible for the other parties to accept the handing-over of the supreme power to the Diet. The laws on democracy in local government and the eight-hour working day, approved in the summer but not confirmed in the absence of the monarch, were confirmed by the new authority, in order to pacify the mob outside the Diet.

The Socialist leaders continued the meeting of the revolutionary committee. The proposal to seize power was adopted by 14 votes to 11, but the proposed leaders did not dare to take the responsibility, and the proposal was defeated in a second vote. The committee's authority was transferred back to the regular executive committee of the Social Democratic Party, and the strike was stopped on 16

important for the October revolution, as Ketola says in his *Kansalliseen kansanvaltaan*. The Red Guards of the capital, and the Red sailors of Kronstadt, with the neutrality of the army garrison in Petrograd, made the military coup possible; and the general situation in Russia formed the political background of the takeover of power by the Bolsheviks.

17 Soikkanen, *Kansalaissota dokumentteina*, vol. I, p. 237. (The Civil War in Documents).

November. The Finnish Socialists had no leader comparable to Lenin, who would have dared to take the chance regardless of consequences.

In the Social Democrat party convention on 25-27 November, a minority was against revolution, another minority was for it, while the majority was unable to make up their minds. In vain did Stalin, attending the convention, stress Lenin's advice to the Finnish party to seize power while promising of fraternal help.¹⁸

The non-Socialists were shocked at the violence revealed during the strike. The men of independence and their activist 'fire brigades' lost all inclination for co-operation with the Left, who seemed to have joined the Russians, while the previously cautious bourgeoisie moved closer to the Activists. They were unanimous in their conviction that the undisciplined Russian soldiers and sailors had to be expelled from the country before order could be restored. Svinhufvud formed a new Senate and appointed as Senators only such men as were decisively for independence. They believed that Finland had to get rid of revolutionary Russia and restore order in the country before it was incurably infected by the Red epidemic.

Accordingly, Svinhufvud informed the Diet on 4 December 1917 that the Senate was preparing a new constitution for Finland as an independent republic, and on 6 December 1917 the Diet accepted the programme.

The Socialists voted against the bourgeois programme. They were not against independence, but they did not want to alienate the Bolsheviks, their sole possible support, and would have preferred an agreement with the Red Russia, with a mixed committee to sort out the details of the separation. As the final decision would have been left to the future constituent assemblies of the two countries, Russia would still formally have had authority over Finland's fate.

The Old or White Russia never accepted the separation of Finland; in their opinion, Finland's political independence constituted a manifest violation of Russia's vital interests and indisputable rights.¹⁹ But the Whites had not much say in the matter, even after organizing their exile committees in Paris. The Empire was rapidly falling apart,

18 Upton, *Vallankumous Suomessa 1917-1918*, p. 327-36. (Revolution in Finland); Rinta-Tassi, *Lokakuun vallankumous ja Suomen itsenäistyminen*, p. 118.

19 Russian ambassador Maklakoff to Quai d'Orsay 12. I 1918; AMAE, Correspondence Politique, Russie Nouvelle Serie nr 13 Guerre 1916-1918, Russie Vol 710, p. 84.

not only in the North, but also in the Baltic provinces, in the Ukraine, in the Caucasus and in the Asiatic Russia. For example, Bashkiria declared its independence on 6 December/23 November.²⁰

The Bolshevik government had a very loose grip on Finland, because there existed few Finnish Bolsheviks, and few civilian Russian Bolsheviks lived in Finland. The Finnish Social Democratic party was independent of the Russian one. Finnish Socialists explained to Lenin that the victory of the Finnish proletariat presupposed that the class battle could be carried on without any national problems interfering; the bourgeoisie must not be allowed to monopolize the patriotic cause.²¹ Lenin advised the Finnish comrades that they only needed to send an official petition to the People's Commissars asking for their recognition of Finland's independence.

Ludendorff certainly wanted the Russians to be chased as far to the east as possible, but freeing his divisions from the east for the Western front was the most immediately important goal, and secondary matters were not to be allowed to disturb the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk. The Ukraine or Finland were to be taken, but only after the Soviet government had acknowledged their independence. The Germans thus encouraged the Finns to obtain recognition from the Bolsheviks, though the Finns were afraid that a later Russian government might disavow this; the Soviet power was not expected to last long.

At Brest-Litovsk, the Bolshevik delegation explained that if Finns really wanted independence, the Soviet government was ready to consent to it. Thus, when Edvard Hjelt, the Finnish delegate in Berlin, asked for German support, the Germans were able to say to him that such support was being given, but that Finns had to ask for recognition in Petrograd.²²

Svinhufvud was extremely reluctant to do this because asking for acknowledgement implied *de facto* recognition of the Bolshevik government and conceding them the right to decide Finland's fate, at least formally. But since neither Germany nor the Scandinavian countries would accept Finland's independence if Finland did not first clear up the matter with the Russian government, the step had to be taken. On 18/31 December 1917 Svinhufvud went to Petrograd and

20 *Kansan lehti* 6. XII 1917.

21 Rinta-Tassi, *Lokakuun vallankumous ja Suomen itsenäistyminen*, pp. 133–34.

22 Polvinen, *Venäjän vallankumous ja Suomi*, vol. I, p. 182 et seq.

the recognition of Finnish independence was signed by Lenin, Trotskii, Stalin, and other People's Commissars.

Then Germany was able to give her official recognition to her protégée, only preceded, a few moments earlier, by the French government, whose lively consul in Helsinki, Reynaud, had advised Paris to take such a measure to vex the Germans. The Scandinavian countries followed, but Britain and America refused to accept the carving up of their former ally just when they were desperately trying to revive a Russian White government in order to restore the Eastern front.

The final decline of Russian military might in Finland

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There was very little else that Lenin could do for the revolution in Finland. The People's Commissars were reluctant to move the old army out of Finland, because its presence was to a certain degree comforting to the local Reds, who also received arms from the soldiers, but the army was definitely useless for revolutionary purposes.

In an atmosphere of threatening revolution and continuing mob disorder, the Finnish Senate on 16 January adopted the White Home Guards as the official army of the Finnish state. Lieutenant General Mannerheim, recently arrived from Russia, was appointed Commander-in-Chief with the task of restoring order in the country. The first armed skirmishes between the Whites and Reds took place on 19 January 1918. Negotiations with the Soviets about the repatriation of the Russian troops did not produce any results. The White Guards started disarming bewildered Russian garrisons in Pohjanmaa on 28 January. In southern Pohjanmaa the Russians were totally surprised, in the northern part of the region they tried to oppose the Whites but were soon subdued.

The commander of the 42nd Army Corps, Nadezhnyi, directed the border guards to gather their small detachments on the western coast into bigger formations at Oulu, Vaasa, Pietarsaari, in Turku and other garrison towns,²³ but it soon became clear that the Finnish White guards were moving too fast and Nadezhnyi's orders did not reach

23 RGVA, fond 4929, opis' 1, delo 51, perepiska v sviazi s vystupleniem belo i krasnoi Gvardii v Finliandii, p. 17, commander of the 42th Corps Nadezhnyi to the 1st Border Guards Foot Regiment 11. I/24. I 1918.

the north-western garrisons. The Whites were estimated by the Russians to be rather strong, 93,000 men with arms taken from "us" and 3,500 men trained in Germany, who had already landed in Pohjanmaa.²⁴ Later, it was learned that at least a number of the Russian troops in Pohjanmaa, 6,000–8,000, had been disarmed by the Whites and sent in railway wagons to Sortavala and then ahead to Kontupohja, where they had been disbanded to find their way home.²⁵

Demobilization of men in the oldest age groups (recruits called up in 1897 and 1898, i.e. about 40 years of age) had been already ordered before the Bolshevik coup,²⁶ to counter indiscipline, desertion, leaving positions without permission or refusal to fight. Industrial workers, who had been mobilized as a punishment for participating in strikes were sent back to their factories.²⁷ In December general demobilization by successive age groups had been ordered starting with the oldest contingents of 1899 and the youngest of 1915–19, and leaving the stores, magazines, hospitals and lines of communication organizations to leave the last; the assembly point for leaving the country was to be at Kouvola, and from Petrograd the men were to continue to their distant home regions; all civilian railway traffic was to cease during the demobilization phase.²⁸

After the first skirmishes of the Reds and Whites, Podvoiskii, the People's Commissar for military affairs, ordered the 42nd Army Corps to disarm the Finnish White Guards. Enckell, who still remained at his post in Petrograd, protested that the Guards were the national army of Finland, and the order was cancelled. The civil war in Finland was not an openly Russo-Finnish war.

When the Germans started their advance into the Baltic provinces in February, the Northern Front tried to defend the approaches to Petersburg. The 42nd Corps in Finland was ordered to concentrate its main forces in the region of Lappeenranta–Säkkijärvi–Viipuri to defend the northern flank of the capital. An enemy landing was to be

24 RGVA, fond 4929, opis' 1, delo 51, p. 107, the 42th Corps to the 106th Division, the 92th Militia Brigade, the Border Guards Brigade 25. I/7. II 1918.

25 RGVA, fond 4929, opis' 1, delo 51, p. 217, pokazanie 25. II 1917.

26 RGVA, fond 4902, opis' I, delo 30 o dezertstva v chastiakh divizii, p. 307, the 42nd Corps to the Border Guards Brigade 8. X/21. X 1917.

27 RGVA, fond 4902, opis' 1, delo 10 o demobilizatsii, p. 89, Dezhurnyi general pri Glavnokom to shtab Finl. pogr. svod. divizii 26. VII 1917/6. I 1918.

28 RGVA, fond 4902, opis' 1, delo 10 o demobilizatsii, p. 35, 42nd Corps to svodn. pogr. brig. 5/17. XII 1917.

expected somewhere on the south-western coast, where Hanko was the most probable point, the earliest to be free from ice. Until then no immediate danger threatened the western part of Finland and demobilization could be continued as planned, but in case of anything happening, all troops in the west, Sveaborg included, were to be placed under the commander of the 106th Division.²⁹ A popular rising against the defending army corps was also expected – the Finnish civil war had, in fact, already started – but only hasty proposals were made to contain it.³⁰

The idea of the Soviet leaders was not to demobilize all the units in Finland; the regiments of the 106th Division were only to be reduced to their peacetime two-battalion strength.³¹

Then, when Trotskii uttered his statement "neither war nor peace", the commander-in-chief Ensign Krylenko declared to the army that the German High Command, supported by the English and French bourgeoisie, had made demands to which the Russian revolution could not consent. But "neither will nor shall we wage the war inherited from the tsars and the capitalists". The war had ended on 28 January/10 February, and consequently full demobilization was ordered on all fronts. Troops were to be withdrawn to rear positions and on into the interior of Russia, but the demobilization had to proceed in an orderly fashion, and materials and arms worth thousands of millions were not to be left abandoned.³²

However, it was impossible to carry out the demobilization in an orderly fashion. For example, from Viipuri it was reported that after the intended demobilization the garrison should have had about 1,500 men, but in fact there were only five hundred men, while a successful defence of the fortress district would have necessitated a garrison of thirty or forty thousand men, or at least five to six thousand men to defend the inner fortress.³³ All army property in Viipuri was given to

29 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 10, the 42th Corps commander Nadezhnyi and a corps committee member to the 106th Division 20. II 1918.

30 RGVIA, fond 4929, opis' 1, delo 69, zhurnal voennykh deistvii za 1918 gody 1. I - 14. III 1918; an almost illegible pencil sketch.

31 RGVIA, fond 2421, opis' 1, 106 peh. diviziia, introduction to the dossier.

32 RGVIA, fond 4902, opis' 1, delo 9 o raznoi perepiski, Obiavleniia prikaz Verhovnago Glavnokomanduiushchago Krylenko 29. I 1918 / 11. II 1918.

33 RGAVMF, delo 1350, opis' 1, delo 78, oborona kreposti Vyborga, p. 25, Komkor 42 Nadezhnyi Narodnomu Komissaru po voennym delam Podvoiskomu 18/5. II 1918.



"Russian soldiers and Finnish Reds in Tampere in 1918. No. 9 Colonel Svetshnikov." In spite of being numbered in the group photo, these people, fighting for a losing cause, have been relegated to the dustbin of history.
Photo: Sotamuseo 720 N 93.

the Finnish Red Guard.³⁴

At first, in January and February 1918 it was not quite clear whether it was a Finnish Civil War or a continuation of Russian revolution that was taking place in Finland. While the 42nd Corps in Viipuri was mainly concerned with demobilization and repatriation of their troops, the chief of staff of the 106th Division in Tampere, Colonel Svetshnikov, who had gone over to the Bolshevik side, made detailed

34 Most of the materiel left by the Russians was taken over by the Finnish Whites after the defeat of the Reds in the Civil War. Rifles and guns left by the Russian army and navy in 1918 constituted the main armament of the Finnish army which in 1939–40 and 1941–44 fought off the Soviet army.

plans for his troops to continue the Russian revolution. The Finnish Red Guards he regarded as only auxiliary troops.³⁵ But soon he understood that there was no fight left in his troops, and he then served as an adviser to the Finnish Red Guards headquarters.

In spite of the order of the People's Commissars, the Baltic fleet could not be demobilized and sent home from Finland as rapidly as the army, unless an immense property were be lost for the working people. The attempt was made to keep ready for action a first category of ships,³⁶ while a second category³⁷ was to be kept in the harbours, their crews either demobilized or ordered to fill up the first category crews, and a third category of ships³⁸ was to be completely decommissioned. Bases were to be decommissioned as they ceased their work.³⁹

Before the Finnish civil war started, in the middle of January, the number of Russian soldiers and sailors in Finland has been estimated to have been almost 80,000 men. They were gradually repatriated from the Red part of the country, and most of the soldiers had left by 15 March, and sailors by 15 April.⁴⁰ Symptomatic of the lack of discipline and the absence of officers was the condition of a barracks abandoned by the troops: "never in my life had I been able to imagine that such filth could exist. Masses of bedbugs, lice and cockroaches crept on

35 *Suomen vapaussota vuonna 1918*, vol. III, pp. 155–56; Svetshnikov, *Vallankumous ja kansalaissota Suomessa 1917–1918; muistelmia ja aineistoa*. (Memoirs and Materials on the Revolution and Civil War in Finland); O. Manninen, "Venäjä Suomen sodassa" (Russia in Finland's War), *Itsenäistymisen vuodet 1917–1920*, vol. II, pp. 40–73.

36 Six ships of the line, five cruisers, 31 torpedo boats, 19 submarines, 15 guardships, 23 minesweepers, 8 minelayers, 2 auxiliaries.

37 One ship of the line, six cruisers, 24 torpedo boats, 7 guardships, 14 minesweepers, one minelayer, 4 auxiliaries.

38 9 submarines, 13 sweepers, 3 gunboats, 2 auxiliaries.

39 RGAVMF, fond 972, opis' 3, delo 35, Dybenko & Raskolnikov, prikaz po flotu Baltiiskogo moria o nevozmozhnosti proizvesti polnuiu demobilizatsii flota 20. II 1918.

40 Repatriated soldiers and sailors

16.-31.I	9,800
1.-15.II	9,300
16.-28.II	12,300
1.-15.III	20,300
16.-31.III	2,900
1.-15.IV	11,000
16.-30.IV	1,000
1.-15.V	1,000
In all	68,200

O. Manninen, "Venäjä Suomen sodassa", p. 61.

the dirty walls, floors could not be seen for garbage and rubbish, not to speak of the lavatories..."⁴¹

Only liquidation commissions were left to clear up the affairs of the troops garrisoned in Finland, but with the defeat of the Finnish Reds even they had to cease their work,⁴² and the advancing Whites robbed the quarters of the naval liquidation commission.⁴³

When the Bolshevik leaders realized that the old army was useless for revolutionary purposes, volunteers were invited to join a new "National Socialist People's Red Army",⁴⁴ but the call went unheeded. It was only during the summer of 1918 that Trotskii started to get a "Workers' and Peasants' Red Army" in fighting condition, too late to intervene in the Finnish civil war.

Only a couple of thousand individual Russian volunteers joined the Finnish Red Guards, and a few thousand Russian Red Guardists were sent by the Petersburg military district to the Karelian Isthmus front, where they were thoroughly defeated by the Finnish Whites. In all, about 5,000–9,000 Russians joined the circa 80,000–100,000 Finnish Red Guards. Those Russians, even civilians, who were caught by the White Finns in or after battle, were massacred.

After the peace of Brest-Litowsk had been signed, even the existence of individual Russian volunteers in Finnish Red Guards gave rise to German protests, which definitely kept the Bolsheviks from intervening in Finland even if they had had any forces to do so.

So the Russians left Finland, which had been part of their Empire for 110 years.

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Civil war in Finland

As related above, political discord had grown close to an open conflict in 1917. The decision of the Senate to adopt the White Guards as the official army of the Finnish state on 16 January 1918 with the task to restore order in the country was interpreted by the Socialists as a

41 Maija Järnefelt, *Muistelmani*, p. 170. (Memoirs of J.)

42 RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 7, likvidatsionnaia komissiiia, delo 4, protokoly 27. II - 10. IV 1918.

43 RGAVMF, fond 353, opis 1', delo 209 o razgrome zanimaemogo komissiei pomeshchenie agentami beloi gvardii i opisi delam unitshtozhennym pri etom 5. V 1918.

44 Perepiska po raznymi voprosami: ... o formirovanii narodno-sotsialisticheskoi gvardii... RGVIA, fond 2262, opis' 1, delo 249.

bourgeois coup. However, the regular Social Democrat Party organs still did not want to revolt. But Left radicals got additional Red members appointed to the party committee, and Lenin's government sent a trainload of rifles and ten field guns to the Finnish comrades. Red guards were mobilized to protect the approaching train, and skirmishes with White guards took place. Feelings grew angrier, moderates were silenced. While the White Guards started disarming Russian garrisons in Pohjanmaa on 28 January, the Red Guards in Helsinki simultaneously occupied government buildings. To their consternation, they were unable to arrest the Senate, a few members of which had already escaped to Pohjanmaa to Mannerheim's headquarters, while others went into hiding in Helsinki until they seized the Russian icebreaker *Volynets* and travelled via Reval and Berlin back to White Pohjanmaa.

As explained above, the Russian revolution did not directly spread to Finland, but both the Bolshevik success and their aid inspired the Finnish radical Reds to resort to force, and frightened the Whites to countermeasures, while the dissolution of the old army had left the country without any legitimate force to maintain law and order. Except for the most moderate Social Democrats, the party members supported the Red revolt out of a feeling of solidarity, while the majority of the Finnish people never doubted the legitimacy of the White side.

When acknowledging Finland's independence, Lenin did not want to create a bourgeois state in the neighbourhood of Petersburg, but neither did he plan for a restoration of the Russian Empire. His aim was world revolution, and at the beginning of 1918 it could not be foreseen that the revolution would be limited to Russia and that the Bolsheviks were destined to have to try Socialism in one country only. But whatever the Bolsheviks' motives and aims, the intention was to maintain their influence in the border country with the aid of the Finnish Reds.

For the Whites, the civil war was a war of liberation in two senses: the Russians were disarmed and expelled from the country, even if that was not the main aspect of the actual fighting; and with the Red defeat, the Bolshevik regime lost its influence in the country, both what little they had then and whatever they might have gained later,⁴⁵

45 The Reds did not fight against Finland's freedom, but for justice and equality, as they perceived it, and for workers' power; but the perceived motives are irrelevant in considering the meaning and importance of what had happened, what it did

which probably spared Finland from the unspeakable horrors of Stalin's regime. For the Reds, the war was the long desired revolution, a battle for a better and more just society, or a chance to avenge past wrongs and make good the untold sufferings of the poor classes. The Whites did not regard the war as a class battle against workers or poor people; the Reds were perceived as rebels and murderers. At least after the war, it appeared that the main reason for the White hatred of the Reds was not the crimes of the hooligans, but the fact that the Reds had accepted the presence of the Russians in the country and had fraternized with them in demonstrations and meetings.⁴⁶

War and revolution had paralysed Russian military strength in Finland, and the Empire had no other support left in the country. Even Red Russia was favoured only by a minority of the lower classes, while the majority adapted well to developments in Finnish society after the war.

The White side, on the other hand, had the might of Germany behind them, or so it seemed. From the Russian Empire, Finland was drawn into the German sphere of influence. The Civil War in Finland was part of the Great War.

An expedition to Finland discussed in Germany

The situation in Finland seemed more and more promising for Germany. The Russian infantry had lost all discipline and fighting ability; perhaps the cavalry and artillery were not so much infected, but the sailors were the worst – they had sold all the brass fixtures from their ships, and their morale was completely 'maximalist'.⁴⁷ Spies informed the German staffs that "in Helsinki [Finnish] Socialists, Red Guards and [Russian] soldiers fraternize and committ robberies, burglaries, and murders".⁴⁸

In the autumn of 1917, arms had been sent to Finland on the SS *Equity*,

cause and might have caused.

46 Halsti, *Mies elää elämänsä*, p. 102. (Memoirs of H.)

47 Probably meaning extreme radicals; German officers could not be expected to discern the philosophical differences between maximalists and Bolsheviks.

48 Ehrenhalb tätiger Vertrauensmann Nr 54 meldet 8. X 1917. BA-MA RM 5/v 4983 Nachrichten über die russische Armee, einschl. allgem. Kriegsvorbereitungen vom 2. September bis 14. November 1917; Nachrichtenoffizier Mitte 6. I 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 5000 Nachrichten über Finnland, vom 1. September 1915 bis 3. Juli 1917.

in December a few Jägers travelled with a second consignment of arms to Pohjanmaa, and eight Jägers with four tons of arms were landed by the *UC 57* on the southern coast.⁴⁹ These measures were aimed at encouraging the pro-German Finnish Activists, and were not for any definite operation.

But then, by the end of 1917 Ludendorff definitely included Finland in his plans. Under a German king, 'independent' Finland would join the Baltic provinces, the Ukraine and Poland to form a German sphere of interest. The Ministries of War and the Marine also pointed out the need for Finnish raw materials and minerals, pulp and paper, and also the importance of preventing the Entente from getting these materials. North German businessmen studied Finnish forests and waterfalls and planned a German-Finnish joint company to take over Finland's foreign trade.⁵⁰

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It was also known that, in spite of having acknowledged Finland's independence, the Soviet government had not withdrawn their soldiers from the country after the Brest-Litovsk treaty. And in Scandinavia 'young Socialists', it was asserted, had already taken steps to start a revolution and to carry it from the North to Germany.⁵¹ All this made necessary and legitimate a German intervention in Finland. Even afterwards, it was stated that in the fight against the Finnish Reds Germany had been protecting her own interests both internally and externally.⁵²

Of immediate and alarming strategic importance was the fact that the British had established a base at Murmansk and were advancing southwards to set up a new Eastern front, and that the Red government

49 The *UC 57* never returned home, and was probably destroyed by mines in the Gulf. The Jägers were supplied with a few arms and plenty of explosives to blow up railway bridges, but the region was already in Red hands, and with the Uusimaa White Guards the Jägers crossed the ice to German-held Estonia in February and returned with the German expedition in April. Cf. Pekkola, *Ihmisten kiusana* (The Memoirs of P., a Jäger from 1917-1918). The small load of arms carried by the *Equity* was distributed among the Home Guards in Pohjanmaa.

50 Reichs-Marine Amt and Adm. Stab 2. III 1918. BA-MA RM 5/v 2874 Handelskriegsrecht Deutschlands und seiner Verbündeter; Gr. H. Qu. 4. III 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 2752, Militärpolitische Angelegenheiten Finnland.

51 Fischer-Lossainen 20. II 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 2769, Militärpolitische Angelegenheiten Schweden; Nachrichtenoffizier Generalkommando 52, 8. III 1918. BA-MA RM 5/v 4998, Politik Russland, die russische Revolution, vom 15. September bis 19. November 1918.

52 von der Goltz, "Saksan aseellinen apu", *Suomen vapaussota*, vol. VII, p. 7. (German Military Help for Finland in the War of Liberation).

in Russia seemed too weak to fight off the intervention.⁵³

Hjelt and Svinhufvud carried to Berlin an urgent call for help from the part of Finland occupied by the Reds. More serious, from the German point of view, was the chance that the Whites might win the civil war without German help. Mannerheim was known to oppose German intervention, and he was supposed to have plans for restoring the *ancien régime* in Petrograd, too.⁵⁴ It seems that the Germans did not learn about an attempt of Helsinki "business community" to ask the British submarine sailors to prevent Russian sailors from landing whilst the Whites dealt with the Reds ashore.⁵⁵

Admiral Holtzendorff, chief of the German Admiralty staff, pressed for an expedition to Finland. He supposed that by the end of March the Red city of Tampere would be surrounded by the Whites, and thus there was not much time left for the German intervention before the big victory would make the White Finns intractable, while a speedy liberation of southern Finland by the Germans would make people there German-minded and would create a counterforce to Mannerheim.⁵⁶

The *Auswärtiges Amt*, more cautious than the annexationist military leaders, warned against an intervention, because they did not believe that Finland could remain independent when Russia grew strong again. And it was hardly correct to provoke even a Red Russia so soon after the peace negotiations had been started.

But the annexationists explained that the civil war in Finland was no concern of Russia because the Bolshevik government had recognized the independence of the former border country. That caused another problem: if the intervention in Finland was not part of the war against Russia, new credits had to be voted for the operation, and that could give the Left opposition in the *Reichstag* a chance to oppose the grant. But the Kaiser decided that the intervention was in the German interest, because Finland might side

53 von der Goltz, "Saksan aseellinen apu", *Suomen vapaussota*, vol. VII, p. 7.

54 Militär-Attaché Stockholm 25. II 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 2752, Militärpolitische Angelegenheiten Finnland; Nachrichtenoffizier Generalkommando 52, 28. II 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 4998, Politik Russland, Die russische Revolution.

55 Wilson, *Baltic Assignment*, p. 215.

56 Adm. St. 1. III 1918, Marine Attaché für die Nordischen Reiche, BA.-MA RM 5/v 3983, O-Angelegenheiten Ostsee; Holzendorff 11. III 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 2752; Militärpolitische Angelegenheiten Finnland, Agent report 25. III 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 1034 Finnland vom Januar 1918 bis Juni 1919.

with the *Entente* if she were not aided. The operation, it was argued, was not a new war but only a police action to expel undisciplined mobs from Finland, as requested by the legally acknowledged government there; and it was vitally important for securing German interests in the war then going on.⁵⁷

In the Great War, Finland soon proved undoubtedly important. From there the Germans might have been able to reach the Murmansk railway and also secure their control of the Baltic Sea by closing the mouth of the Gulf of Finland. It might also have become necessary to advance further to the east to attack Petersburg from the north as well as from the south, from Estonia, if the Bolshevik government should prove intractable.⁵⁸

The official Finnish invitation for German aid was received on 17 February 1918. As a first move, the Finnish Jägers were released from the German army and the reliable ones⁵⁹ were transported aboard Finnish ships to the White capital, Vaasa, where they arrived on 25 February. The Swedes materially aided the move by lighting the beacons and lighthouses, which were normally extinguished during the war. The Jägers were vitally important to the victory of the White army as leaders, while the Red Guards, numerically perhaps equal or even stronger, totally lacked trained officers, with the exception of a few Russian advisers.

Then the German army started collecting troops for a brigade which was to land on the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia to support the Finnish White army. The Admiralty staff organized a special detachment for the Baltic Sea, *Sonderverband Ostsee* under Vice Admiral Meurer. The almost obsolete *Nassau* class, the first German dreadnoughts, formed the main naval force, with a couple of torpedo boat flotillas, a few auxiliary cruisers, an aeroplane tender, a hospital ship, and numerous transports.

An unexpected Swedish move made a speedy start even more necessary.

57 Aspelmeier, *Deutschland und Finnland während der beiden Weltkriege*, p. 57.

58 Ludendorff to Adm. Stab 24. II 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 3983.

59 Unreliable Red Jägers were left waiting for later repatriation, cf. Lackman, *Jääkärimuistelmia*.

The Åland incident

In Åland, Red guards, undisciplined Russians, and a White detachment – which had retreated from the Red part of the mainland – were making life difficult for the local population. To save them, King Gustaf V and his Minister of Marine, Erik Palmstierna, sent a peacekeeping force, which arrived on the Islands on 14 February. The local population asked for self-government or, preferably, union with Sweden. The Reds and Russians were expelled from the Islands, and the Whites transported to White Pohjanmaa.⁶⁰

On hearing the news of the Swedish coup, the *Sonderverband* made ready and the *Großherzoglich* Mecklenburg Jäger Battalion 14 was embarked, but then the expedition had to wait while the political problem was sorted out. The Admiralty staff thought that Åland, when liberated, could perhaps be left to the Swedes, if co-operation between the Germans, Swedes and Finns against the British and Russian enemies might then arise. No, the Baltic naval staff answered, Finnish sovereignty on the islands would be a guarantee against Entente influence in the North. Germany herself might need the Islands for a naval base, which would be impossible if Sweden, having got there, then joined the Entente, but it would easy to arrange with the Finns, whom "we have politically tied to ourselves and our aims".

William II promised Gustaf V that he was not going to prevent Swedish humanitarian work on the islands, nor did he plan a permanent annexation, but he asked that the King should not prevent the German expedition. Of course, the King consented; after all, Sweden had only a couple of armoured ships against the German dreadnoughts. Even if the *Nassau* was worn out and the *Posen* under repair, the *Rheinland* and the *Westfalen* were powerful enough to scare the Swedes. The *Sonderverband* arrived in Åland on 5 March 1918.⁶¹ The Swedes met the Germans peacefully, and soon left the archipelago. It seems that with the exception of the court and a few officers, the King and his Minister had slim support in political circles in Sweden for their imperialist activity. Mannerheim sent an officer

60 Stjernfelt, "Åland 1918 – säregen föregångare till nutida FN-operationer."

61 Adm. Stab to OHL 23. II 1918, Ludendorff s.d.(February 1918), O-Angelegenheiten Ostsee 1. IX 1915 - 31. I 1918, BA_MA RM 5/v 3983; Holtzendorff 25. V 1918, Ostsee O-Angelegenheiten 1. V 1918 - 15. VIII 1918; Marinevertreter Helsingfors 17. VI 1918, Laufende Marine Politik, Aaland BA-MA RM 5/v 2702; Laufende Marine Politik, Aaland, BA-MA RM 5/v 1023.

to act as Military Governor at Mariehamn to underline Finnish sovereignty over the islands.

Thus the Russian, Red Finnish, and Swedish claimants to Åland had to desist from their aspirations and were replaced by the forces of the German Empire. The fortifications erected by the Russians were restored into fighting condition in spite of the protest of the Swedish government that the demilitarized (since 1856) status of the archipelago remained important for Stockholm's security. At the behest of the military and naval leadership, the *Auswärtiges Amt* delayed discussions on the projected destruction of the fortresses, so that negotiations were only started in August, and never concluded before Germany's fall in November 1918.⁶²

Germany would have liked to keep Åland if it had been possible and easy, but the archipelago was not in itself a goal of German imperialism;⁶³ it was important only as a means for further politics and military-naval action.

The expedition to Finland

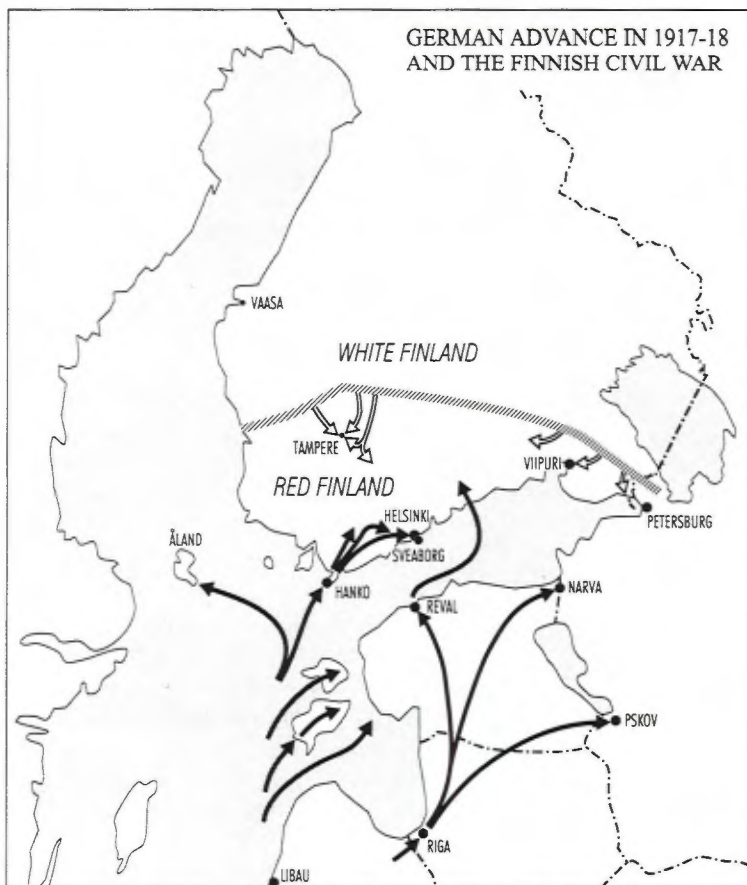
The German plan had been to establish a base on Åland for a landing on the Gulf of Bothnia, but then, after taking the Islands, further advance up the ice-covered Gulf was deemed too dangerous. An icebreaker had been lost to mines and the *Rheinland* ran aground and had to be sent home for repairs.

Instead, Hanko on the south-western edge of Finland was chosen. The *Hochseeflotte* was against risking any big ships, but Ludendorff insisted, and Meurer of course supported the expedition. The chief of the Admiralty staff, Admiral von Trotha, dreamed of seizing the icebound and helpless Russian ships in the Finnish ports.⁶⁴ More troops were collected and an *Ostseedivision* or Baltic Division was formed under the command of General Rüdiger von der Goltz. The

62 Marine Politik Nordstaaten 8. IX - 15. X 1918, BA_MA RM 5/v 3916; Zusammenstellung der marinepolitischen Ereignisse zwischen Deutschland und Russland in Ostsee und Eismeer nach Brester Frieden, Admiralstab 28. VII 1918, Militärpolitische Angelegenheiten, Nordstaaten BA_MA RM 5/v 3919.

63 As hinted by Menger, *Die Finnlandpolitik des deutschen Imperialismus 1917-1918*, p. 129.

64 M[äkelä], "Amiraali von Trotha ja Saksan apu Suomelle 1918" (Admiral von Trotha and German aid for Finland in 1918), pp. 1195-96; Herwig, *'Luxury Fleet', The Imperial German Navy 1888-1918*, p. 239.



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[German advance in 1917-18 and the Finnish Civil War.

The Russian revolution of 1917 created a vacuum of power in the East, filled by German influence which prevented the spread of the Red influence to the previously Russian border countries by the Baltic Sea.

SMS Posen arrived to replace the *Rheinland*.

Ice conditions were reconnoitred by aeroplanes, mines were swept – in which two minesweepers were lost – and lighthouses on the Estonian coast were lighted, which made possible the exact marking of the narrowly swept passages. The expedition arrived at Hanko on 3 April. The Russians blew up their submarines wintering there and left, and as well the Red flag on the town council building was soon lowered.

From Hanko, the Baltic Division advanced towards Helsinki and Riihimäki. They saw the traces of the civil war: houses looted, people killed, women weeping; the bayonet seemed to have been the favoured means of murder. "*Und so was nennt sich noch Jarde, verdammtes Schweinvolk ob rot oder weiss*" (And such people call themselves Guards, damned beasts all, reds and whites equally), a German Uhlan of the Guards wondered.⁶⁵ The *Sonderverband* sailed on to Reval and from there crossed the Gulf of Finland to join the army division in the conquest of Helsinki on 13-14 April. "Suddenly, shots broke a windowpane. Far up on Yrjönkatu a few soldiers could be seen. They approached, they had strange uniforms, THEY WERE GERMANS".⁶⁶ The nightmare of the Whites ended, it was the turn of the Reds to fear for their lives.

The Finnish icebreaker *Tarmo* took Suursaari and together with the *Volynets*, which, after the seizure, was rechristened the *Väinämöinen*,⁶⁷ carried another German brigade from Estonia to Loviisa, on the northern coast of the Gulf. The Reds were thus pressed between the Germans in the south and the Whites in the north.

Alarmed by the appearance of the German expedition to Åland, part of the Russian fleet in Helsinki had escaped through the ice-bound Gulf of Finland to Kronstadt, aided by the giant icebreaker *Ermak*, a deed which can be deemed heroic, with regard to the weather, the ice-covered sea, and the condition of the ships after more than a year of revolutionary neglect. "The loveliest sight of my life. Russian warships are just now escaping towards Petersburg, leaving their smoke hanging in the air", an eye witness wrote on 12 March.⁶⁸ Then the *Tarmo* expedition to Suursaari prevented further moves. The Russians in Helsinki sent a delegation of naval officers elected by the crews to Meurer, who promised them protection and a free passage home if they desisted from fighting and from destroying anything. An accord was signed on 5 April, and such ships as were navigable left Helsinki.⁶⁹ Sveaborg was found abandoned, its guns stripped of their

65 Halsti, *Muistelmat*, vol. I, pp. 84, 87.

66 Glory Leppänen, *Elämäni teatteri*, p. 46.

67 The ship was left to serve in Estonian navy until the Soviets took over in 1940 and named it again *Volynets*.

68 Aho, *Hajamietteitä kapinaviikoilta*, vol. III, p. 22 (Thoughts during the weeks of the rebellion).

69 In all, 211 ships reached Kronstadt, while 171 lesser ones were not able to leave their wartime bases. *Conway's All the World's Fighting Ships 1906-1921* p. 293;



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"German soldiers advancing along the Aurora Street in Helsinki in April 1918." In the background to the right, the *Alexander Gimnazii*, which was intended to house a future Russian university, which would contribute to the Russification of the Finnish civil service. The German liberation and the White victory in the Civil War put an end to all Russian influence in the country.

Photo: Sotamuseo 709 N 88.

locks. A few British submarines were blown up by their crews to avoid leaving them to the Germans.⁷⁰ Thus the idea of seizing the Russian battleships was rendered void, because Meurer believed that the Russian sailors were sympathetic to the Finnish Reds and he was anxious to silence the ships and fortresses in Helsinki. In fact, the sailors seem to have been rather indifferent about the war in Finland, while the surviving naval officers might have attempted to sink their ships if the Germans had insisted on taking them over. The

the British sailors blew up their submarines the *E 1*, *E 8*, *E 9*, *E 19*, *C 26*, *C 27*, *C 35*, PRO ADM 137, part II, British Naval Losses, but it is not quite clear whether all were in Helsinki or some at Hanko.

70 *E 1*, *E 8*, *E 9*, *E 19*, *C 26*, *C 27*, *C 35*, according to Vitikka, "Britit Itämerellä 1500-1700-luvuilla" ("The British in the Baltic Sea"; in fact, Vitikka writes rather much of the 19th and 20th centuries, and not much about the 16th-18th centuries).

commander of the Russian Baltic Fleet, Rear Admiral A.P. Zelenoi, left Helsinki on 28 April on board his flagship, the *Pamiat Azova*.

Admiral Meurer reported: "In loyal comradeship-in-arms with the army we completed our task. Thus we have succeeded in making a further move in our fight for naval domination against the English".⁷¹

In reality, it was a step against Russian naval might, which had been rendered powerless by the revolution, but, of course, might have put up some fight if sufficiently provoked. Without German help, the White Finns might have found the Russian ships a problem hard to tackle. Now the Russian navy had been pushed to the eastern end of the Gulf of Finland, behind the walls of Kronstadt.

In the land campaign, the battle of Tampere had ended in White victory on 6 April, and the German landing and occupation of the southern parts of the country rendered the situation of the Reds definitely hopeless. The Karelian Isthmus was cleared, the Red government escaped to Russia with twenty thousand supporters, and the last Russians were massacred in Viipuri at the end of April. The last Reds were flushed out in the Kymijoki valley during the first week of May.

To counter the admiration for the German liberators in southern Finland, Mannerheim organized a victory parade by his peasant army in Helsinki on 16 May 1918. Killing arrested Reds continued for a while, but the majority of them (about 80,000) were collected in prisoner-of-war camps, where about 12,000 of the starved prisoners died of typhus and influenza. Many of the survivors were amnestied in the autumn, but agitators, leaders and those guilty of crimes were retained.

The Bulgaria of the North

The *Ostseedivision* stayed in Finland for the summer and autumn of 1918. Mannerheim disapproved of the German presence, especially their influence in the organization of Finnish troops from volunteer bodies into a regular army, because his authority suffered, and, even more significantly, he understood that the Germans had plans of their own for Finland. The Senate, however, believed that constant German

71 von Meurer s.d. (April 1918), BA-MA RM 5/v 1034, Finnland vom Januar 1918 bis June 1918.

support was vital for Finnish independence in case of a Russian revival, which Finland could not withstand alone. To ensure German support, Finnish conservatives proposed the election of a German prince as King of Finland, and Prince Friedrich Karl of Hesse accepted the nomination. Monarchy or 'a strong government' was also preferred to prevent any revival of mob rule or Red terror; and there were people ambitious to become courtiers, of course.

The new Finnish army was organized into three infantry divisions and a jäger brigade, with peacetime strength of 25,000 men. General von der Goltz was the chief military adviser with the title of 'German General in Finland', and Colonel von Redern was influential, too, as the chief of the Finnish staff. Their commission, confirmed by the Finnish Minister of War Thesleff,⁷² was to secure German interests in the organization of the Finnish army.⁷³

The situation in Finland was thus quite propitious for German interests, but in the Gulf of Finland problems remained because the Russians had been allowed to save their ships. Meurer and the Baltic naval commanders would have liked to keep the *Posen* and the *Westfalen*, but the big ships were ordered back to their home base in Jade. The remaining light craft and minesweepers guarded the passages and harbours in the Gulf, under the command of Admiral von Usslar at Libau, who had the title 'Commander of the Baltic Waters', *Befehlshaber der Baltischen Gewässer*.

Some hope or wish existed that the Red sailors might sell their ships, and later, by the end of the summer, Russian monarchist officers took up the idea. They told the Germans that Trotskii, under the influence of the English, had ordered the ships to be blown up to avoid leaving them to be captured, and the officers said that they preferred a German internment of their ships in order to save them for a future Imperial Russian fleet. On the other hand, the German Foreign Office proposed that the Soviet government should comb out the British agents from their crews and the German embassy at Moscow should enlist reliable agents instead; thus the Russian ships

72 Wilhelm Thesleff, a Finnish-born colonel in the Russian army, was wounded and taken prisoner-of-war in the conquest of Riga, joined the Jägers and tried to rival Mannerheim.

73 Dienstanweisung 29. VI 1918 für den Chef des deutschen Generalstabes beim finnischen Heere oberst von Redern (signed by Wilh. Thesleff). BA-MA RM 5/v 2705, Laufende Marine Politik.

could be made to join the fight against the British on the Murmansk coast. The German Admiralty staff opposed these proposals, because they implied the possibility of a rebirth of the Russian Imperial fleet; it was better to let the Russians blow up their ships.⁷⁴ Nothing came of these plans, any more than the similar British ideas in 1917, because the sailors had in fact no idea of selling any ships, and the Red terror soon liquidated the monarchists.

However, a couple of hospital ships and a few warships had been left in Finland and they were taken over by the Germans. They gave some of them to the Finns, who organized a navy of their own, under the guidance of the Germans, of course. Training for mine-sweeping was started at Santahamina on 16 May, and during the summer four flotillas were formed.⁷⁵

The German naval officers dreamed of a big role in Finland, comparable to that of the army officers. The chief adviser of an independent Finnish naval commander-in-chief was to be '*Ältester deutscher Seeoffizier in Finnland*' and simultaneously '*Marinevertreter bei den Kaiserlich deutschen Ministerresident*', i.e. senior naval officer and naval attaché; lieutenant commander (*Korvettenkapitän*) Reuter was appointed to the post. But higher staffs considered that two senior officers were sufficient for the tiny forces of Finland, and in the end Reuter, as adviser to the Finnish fleet commander, Rear Admiral Johannes Indrenius, was placed under the orders of Colonel v. Redern.⁷⁶

At Brest-Litovsk, the Bolshevik government had undertaken to clear the navigation passages from mines, but the task proved insuper-

74 Adm. Stab to OHL 3. V 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 3986; Embassy in Moscow to AA 25. VII 1918, Reichs-Marine Amt to Adm. Stab 9. IX 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 2701; Adm. Stab to Hochseeflotte 13. IX 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 3919.

75 Vorschlag für die Sitzung mit Vertreter der finnischen Regierung der Seefahrtsabteilung 24. IV 1918. BA-MA RM 5/v 4467, Finnland vom 1 Mai bis 7 juni 1918. Each of the flotillas consisted of 10-15 minesweeping boats, a couple of tugs, and a bigger tender; memoirs of a participant: Lieto, "Meriemme miinanpuhdistustyön alkuvaiheita v. 1918", (Minesweeping in 1918), pp. 314-16, 333-34.

76 Vorschlag zur organisation der Küstenverteidigung Finnlands, s.d. (July 1918) BA-MA RM 5/v 1034; Über Organisation der Finnischen Marine s.d. (July 1918) BA-MA RM 5/v 4468

For the Finnish point of view see: Mattila, "Organisaatiokysymyksiä merivoimimme perustamisvaiheessa" & "Merivoimimme alkutaipaleelta" pp. 15-23 & 96-107; Mattila, "Suomen laivastovoimien vaiheista ennen itsenäisyyden aikaa". (The Foundation of the Finnish Navy).

able for the Red fleet, not least because the Finns would not allow any Bolsheviks in their waters, nor had the Germans any wish to see a Russian naval revival even in the form of minesweeping trawlers. Therefore Russians were freed from the obligation, but then there emerged a problem over the charts of the minefields, which the Russians said they had lost.⁷⁷

A further problem was the possession of the fort of Ino after the conquest of the Karelian Isthmus. The Finns demanded that the Russian garrison should leave the fort, but the Germans thought that because Kronstadt could easily be bombarded from Ino, that demand might drive the Russians into desperation. Instead, the Finns should demand as a compensation, said the Germans, the fjord of Petsamo on the Arctic coast, and perhaps also Murmansk. In the opinion of the German Admiralty staff, even that was too little: the Finnish border should be moved to Lake Onega and the White Sea, in the German interest.⁷⁸

Then the garrison of Ino blew up the fort and left the ruins for the Finns, but a further disagreement arose about territorial waters. The Bolsheviks mined the approaches to Kronstadt and Petersburg, which provoked a German protest. The argument was that the Gulf of Kronstadt measured eleven miles and in Brest the Bolsheviks had promised not to mine international waters, i.e. outside the three-mile limit. The Russians claimed all the waters to the east of Suursaari–Someri–Vidskär were included in their minesweeping area, and no foreigners could be allowed in the vicinity of their base. For their part, the Finns would not let their islands be included in the Russian area, and the Germans wanted to control the Gulf of Kronstadt to prevent any surprises by the Russian warships – they always feared a provocation by the ever-present British agents.⁷⁹

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77 Much detailed documentation is in BA-MA RM 5/v 2701, Laufende Marine-Politik Ostsee vom Februar 1918 bis Juli 1919; BA-MA RM 5/v 3966, Ostsee, O-Angelegenheiten vom 1. V 1918 bis 30. VI 1918; BA-MA RM 5/v 4976 nachrichten über die feindliche Flotte und Küstenbefestigungen; BA-MA RM 5/v 4996, Politik Russlands, die russische Revolution.

78 Holtzendorff to OHL 16. V 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 3986; Bericht des Befehlshabers der Baltischen Gewässer 16. VI 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 2701.

79 Records of these discussions, with innumerable uninteresting details, are included in the dossiers BA-MA RM 5/v 2701 Laufende Marine-Politik Ostsee vom Februar 1918 bis Juli 1919; 2767 Militärpolitische Angelegenheiten Russland; 3920 Militärpolitische Angelegenheiten Nordstaaten; 3987 Ostsee O-angelegenheiten 1.VII–31.X 1918. Trotskii and his sailors were not, of course, British agents, any more than Lenin was a German one.

Grandiose dreams

In the summer of 1918 the Germans had a few difficulties with their two friends the Bolsheviks and the Finns. They invited the two parties to Berlin and tried to help them negotiate. To make possible the pacification of the east and encourage the Bolshevik government to fight against the British in the north, Finnish expansionist dreams about East Karelia were restrained for a while; but the Finns wanted no peace without the liberation of all Karelia.

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The idea of a Greater Finland was well in accordance with the temper of times; all Europe was dreaming of a Greater Rumania or making a Yugoslavia out of Serbia or redeeming Italia irredenta or recovering the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, nor to speak of Polonia rediviva. The eastern border of Finland, which had delimited the Grand Duchy from other parts of Russia, was no ethnic border. For the Activists, it seemed natural that the Eastern Karelians should to be liberated along with the rest of the Finnish people. They had been governed by Russians since the conquest by Novgorod and they were Orthodox Christians, but they should have been Finns if only they had known what was best for them. The arguments for a Greater Finland were that the inhabitants of East Karelia spoke a dialect of the Finnish language, the national epic, the *Kalevala*, had been collected there, and the country belonged geologically to Fennoscandia, not to the Russian plain. The annexation of East Karelia made sense economically, too, because of the immense forests, mineral resources, water-power and fishing waters of the region; by these prospects the Activists tried to stir up German support for their dreams. The annexation was also supposed to make the defence of Finland easier on the three narrow isthmuses, one between the Gulf of Finland and Ladoga, another between Ladoga and Onega, and the third between Onega and the White Sea.

There existed a few East Karelians who strove either for the independence of their country or for joining Finland, and who were encouraged by the Finnish interest. In June 1918, they took the town of Olonets for a while, and there were scattered risings against the Bolsheviks. On the other hand, Finnish workers constructing the Murmansk railway and Red Guards, who had escaped from Finland, formed a detachment to fight against the White Finns, who crossed the border in the North. This body was enlisted in June 1918 by the British expedition and was formed into a Murmansk Legion to fight against the German-supported White Finns and the Bolsheviks.

The Activists argued that Germany had every reason to take East

Karelia or to support Finland in its annexation, for Britain was certain to steal the province; tsarist Russia had allowed her ally to take Murmansk as a base.⁸⁰

While the German government and the OHL kept the Finns on the leash during the summer of 1918, the German Baltic naval staffs continued planning for Finnish co-operation in the naval war. The first task was to occupy the coastal fortresses vacated by the Russians at Hanko, Porkkala, Sveaborg and Koivisto. Thus not many men were left to man the few surviving ships of the former Russian Baltic fleet. In addition to the minesweeping flotillas, which already existed, a torpedo boat flotilla and a coast guard flotilla were planned to give the Finns a naval force against their malevolent neighbours. On 1 October 1918, the gunboats *Karjala* and *Turunmaa* with the torpedo boats *S 1*, *S 2*, *S 3*, *S 4* and *S 5* steamed out to sea and "for the first time the Finnish national flag flew above the open sea".⁸¹ Finland was thus an ally comparable to Bulgaria (as Wetterhoff had enthused), which could be allowed national symbols of its own, not being an occupied *Reichsland* like the Baltic provinces where all manifestations for national feeling were denied.

An annex to the Brest treaty was signed on 27 August 1918, whereby Soviet Russia promised to expel the British from the country, while the Germans were not to allow the Finns to attack Petersburg meanwhile. But as the autumn of 1918 drew closer, it was seen ever more clearly that the Bolshevik government had probably no wish

80 *Finnland im Lichte des Weltkrieges*, von Friedrich Wetterhoff, Berlin 1916. BA-MA RM 5/v 5000 Nachrichten über Finnland. – Wetterhoff was the fiery representative of the Finnish Jäger movement in Berlin, apt to be carried away by fantastic visions, but these features were common to all Finnish nationalists. It is to be stressed that the economic aims were of interest mainly as lures for the Germans; the nationalists were no businessmen themselves. cf. Churchill, Jääskeläinen, Nevakivi.

81 *Aftonbladet* 2. X 1918, *Hufvudstadsbladet* 9. X 1918; cuttings from the Swedish-speaking newspapers were pasted in the German reports, BA-MA RM 5/v 1034, Finnland vom Januar bis June 1919.

The guard ship *Golub* was taken in April by the Germans, rechristened the *Beo* but given to the Finns in November and called the *Uusimaa*; the *Pingvin* became the German *Wulf* and then the Finnish *Hämeenmaa*, *Chinok* became the *Turunmaa*, the *Filin* the *Karjala*, the minelayer *Voin* was rechristened the *M 7* and then the *Louhi*, the minesweeper *Zashchitnik* became the *T 2* and then the *Vilppula*, the *Fortral* became the *Rautu*, and the motor coastal minelayers the *Loimu*, *Paukku*, *Lieska*, and *Pommi* were originally Russian T-boats. A few captured ships were later returned to Soviet Russia, e.g. the minesweepers the *Gruz*, *Kaps'ul*, *Krambol*, *Plamia*, and seven torpedo boats out of the ten captured.

and certainly no capability to prevent the British and their Russian and Finnish auxiliaries from advancing southwards from Murmansk and Archangel.

Reports from Petersburg told of political tension, demonstrations, lack of bread, peasant disorders, monarchist plots, and looting by Red soldiers. Respectable people were hoping for German intervention: the Baltic Provinces, Lithuania and the Ukraine had been liberated, even Finland. Only Great Russia remained in misery. Desperate Russians prayed for help from their previous enemies; they would be eternally grateful if Germany would help them, but if not, the British with their unlimited means would put up a new government in Russia and make Russia wage war against the Germans. The British were said to be organizing a local independent republic out of the Karelian districts of Viena and Olonets to prevent the Germans from getting the resources there. Maybe the Russians were war-weary, but at least the Czechs, Serbs, Latvians, Cossacks and Russian White mercenaries could be made to fight against the Germans.⁸²

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Reports of the British influence continued to be alarming – if the military and naval staffs really believed them; they may also have been provoked by the staffs, to provide arguments for their wish to intervene in the east. The essential goal of the OHL was included in the promise in the treaty of 27 August to come and help Soviet Russia if it should be unable to fulfill its engagements.

The Bolshevik government would not allow any German help to arrive through Petersburg; such a promise might have shattered any patriotic support the Soviet power enjoyed. But there existed no way from the Baltic to Murmansk except through Petersburg – the roads from Finland through the forests could be used only by guerilla troops.

However that may be, eight divisions were ordered to prepare for operation *Schlufstein* towards the east from Narva and Pskov, and the Baltic division in Finland also received orders to take part. A new *Sonderverband* under Vice Admiral Boedicker was formed. Five

82 Agent reports and military and naval comments on them in BA-MA RM 5/v 2767 Militärlpolitische Angelgenheiten Russland; 4066 Russland 1.IV 1918–22.X 1918; 4998 Politik Russland, Die russische Revolution vom 15. September bis 19 November 1918; Die Militärlpolitische Lage in osten 15. VII 1918, Grosses Hauptquartier 4. VIII 1918, Grosses Hauptquartier 15. VIII 1918 (memoranda), BA-MA RM 5/v 1435, Nachrichten Russland Allgemeines, vom April 08 bis September 1918.

cruisers (the *Regensburg*, *Stralsund*, *Strassburg*, and *Frankfurt* in addition to the *Kolberg* which already belonged to the Baltic fleet) and numerous torpedo boats were transferred to Koivisto in the Gulf of Finland, while the dreadnoughts *Ostfriesland*, *Thüringen*, and *Nassau* remained waiting in Kiel, and the light forces continued sweeping the Gulf of Finland free of mines.

At the end of August and beginning of September, Boedicker sailed to the east to inspect the preparations. A landing detachment was formed for the conquest of Petersburg, and naval support for the army was planned for the crossing of Lake Ladoga and the transport of supplies.⁸³ Of the enemy, it was known that a few warships – one of the *Novik* class, two torpedo boats, one submarine, six minelaying boats – had been transferred to Ladoga, but in the first half of September they were already docked for the winter. On the Onega, there were four torpedo boats and four motorboats, but they were immobile because their sailors opposed any operations.⁸⁴

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Thus the German army and navy had taken the Baltic provinces and Finland from Russia; the Baltic was again a German sea. German might was on the doorstep of the former Russian capital, which was threatened from Narva, from Viipuri and from the Gulf of Finland.

The Swedes, worried about the threatening German–British conflict in Finland, tried to make the Germans promise not to advance to the Murmansk coast, so that the British could leave the region. But for the German navy, the Arctic coast was the ultimate goal of intervention in Finland, and it could be reached only by aiding the Finns to liberate their Karelian brothers. Then, because they would be too weak to defend their conquest against a revived Russia, they would remain dependent on Germany and would allow the German navy into their Arctic harbours.⁸⁵

Ludendorff agreed with the idea of letting Finland annex the Arctic coast. The region along the Murmansk railway was to be Finnish, but the fate of the Kola peninsula would be discussed later. Finns could

83 Adm. St. 24. VIII 1918; Kaiserlich Deutscher Marinevertreter, Helsinki 15. IX 1918 BA–MA RM 5/v 3987 Ostsee O-Angelegenheiten 1. VII.–31. X. 1918.

84 Angeblich zuverlässige Meldung 30. VII 1918; Zuverlässiger Helfer berichtet 26. VIII 1918; Nachrichtenstelle Helsingfors 9. IX & 17. IX; Zuverlässiger Agent No 65 2. X 1918; Zuverlässiger Gefährsmann 10. X 1918. BA–MA RM 5/v 4978, Nachrichten über die feindliche Flotte und Küstenbefestigungen.

85 Correspondence of Auswärtiges Amt and Admiralstab 11. IX – 13. IX 1918. BA–MA RM 5/v 2752 Militärpolitische Angelegenheiten Finnland.

develop the coast, but German capital should be given concessions there for forestry, sawmills, and harbour installations.⁸⁶

Plans for permanent German influence in Finland, and for effective exploitation of Finnish and Karelian raw materials and markets, were drafted by political and business circles in Germany, though they had no immediate influence on military and naval operations.⁸⁷

The staff of the *Sonderverband* estimated that since no decision could be reached on the Western front or in the North Sea, it had been a sensible move to direct naval operations to the Baltic. But it was only the first step. With the conquest of the Murmansk coast and the establishment of a naval base there, Britain would no longer be able to prevent German ships from reaching the Atlantic Ocean. Russia's contact with the West would be cut, and submarine operations from the north would break the British blockade of the German Bight and the coast of Flanders. The Entente understood these facts and that was why they had invaded the north of Russia.⁸⁸ Finland would be the solution to the German strategic problem on the war of two fronts.⁸⁹

The Admiralty Staff agreed with Meurer, and his staff continued to develop these ideas even after the Admiral had left the Baltic, and again Ludendorff agreed. The full value of Finland as an ally would only be realized when its territories were extended to the Arctic coast. It would be a favourable factor in the Great War, and, after the war, Finnish access to the Arctic Ocean would be economically useful for Germany.⁹⁰

86 OHL to Adm. Stab 24. V 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 3988, Reichs-Marine-Amt to OHL 10. IX 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 4648.

87 Nurmio, *Suomen itsenäistyminen ja Saksa* (The Finnish Independence and Germany); Rautkallio, *Kaupantekoa Suomen itsenäisyydellä; Saksan sodanpäämäärät Suomessa 1917–1918* (German War Aims in Finland)

88 Bericht des Befehlshabers des Baltische Gewässer 16. VI 1918; Über die Verhältnisse in Finnland 10. VII 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 2701; Meurer 29. IV 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 1034. Beiträge für ein aufzustellendes Marineabkommen mit Finnland, Korvettenkapitän Brun 12. IX 1918. BA-MA RM 5/v 2705, Laufende Marine Politik, Marine Konvention Finnland. – The naval treaty, which would have made these plans official, could not be concluded in time before the German defeat in November, but the preliminaries reveal the direction of ideas among the military and naval leaders.

89 Kiep, *Saksan laivaston toiminta Suomen vapaussodassa keväällä 1918* p. 11 (The Activity of the German Navy in the Finnish War of Liberation in the Spring of 1918. – Doktor Kiep served as a staff officer in the Sonderverband).

90 Holtzendorff to OHL 19. V 1918. BA-MA RM 5/v 3986. OHL remarks to Reichs-Marine-Amt 10. IX 1918. BA-MA RM 5/v 4648.

The end of the German Empire

Everything was ready for the operation *Schlußstein* and plans for victorious submarine warfare from the Arctic base had been sketched out, which also implied aiding the Finns to seize the East Karelia.

But the Great War had exhausted Germany, too. The German army in the west turned from advance to retreat. Bulgaria, the southern model for Finland, had collapsed by the end of September, and the troops collected for *Schlußstein* were sent to the South, though they arrived too late. Austria had needed propping up for a long time. In the end, Ludendorff himself lost all hope.

The Finns realized that they had trusted the losing power in the Great War and rapidly changed sides. Mannerheim was called back to service as Regent, and succeeded in persuading the victors that Finland was, after all, on their side. The Finns, the most eager Germanophiles excluded, minded Finland's interests and sought aid wherever it was obtainable.

The King-elect, Friedrich Karl, ceased to learn Finnish, and the Baltic division left Finland, the last troops on 12 December 1918, to continue fighting for a while on the southern side of the Gulf. General von der Goltz was honoured in speeches of gratitude by the Finns for his contribution to the liberation of Finland from the Reds and Russians.

The Germans had insufficient time to carry out their plans for the exploitation of Finland. Finland had been a grateful and eager vassal, and the fate reserved for it in German plans has become known only subsequently.

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THE NAVAL ENEMY FOR THE LAST TIME

In November 1918 the Royal Navy arrived and German hegemony was replaced by an intrusion of the British Empire into the Baltic. It was only with the consent of the victorious enemy that the Baltic Division could be transported away from Finland.⁹¹ Thus both the Russian and German empires were practically extruded from the Baltic

91 Telegrams from Copenhagen and Christiania 24. XI 1918, BA-MA RM 5/v 2701.

Sea and the coastal lands by the ancient 'naval enemy' of the Russian war plans.

Western intervention and local conflicts

As Imperial Russia lost her will and ability to fight, Britain, France, the USA and even Japan had tried to prop her up materially and spiritually, with ammunition from their stores and with propaganda for their war aims. After the Bolsheviks defected from the Entente, the Allied involvement grew into a military intervention, first to restore a White government to continue Russia's fight against the Central Powers, and then to contain the Red revolution.

As we saw above, a British expedition to the north landed at Murmansk and Archangel in March 1918 to guard the stores of military material the allies had sent there. Its aims were to encourage the Russians to build up a new Eastern front to prevent the flow of German divisions to the Western front, and finally to help rid Russia of the Bolsheviks.⁹² There the local Pink if not quite White Soviets joined the interventionists. Strengthened by the Murmansk Legion and other half-starved auxiliaries – hunger was more important for the local people than ideology – the interventionists cautiously advanced southwards towards Onega and Vologda during the summer.⁹³ But the northern Russian counter-revolutionary governments were never able to stabilize their position, nor to make contact with the main White forces in Siberia or in south Russia. Fighting went on in 1919, with varying success. War-weariness increased among the British soldiers and sailors, while the Bolshevik force grew with their success in the civil war on other fronts. In February 1920, the Reds conquered Archangel and, in March, took Murmansk. For Finland, the main significance of the Allied forces in the north was, in 1918, that they drew the German interest towards Finland, as recounted in the previous chapter, and, in 1919, prevented the Finns from taking Russian or East Karelia.

92 Maynard, *The Murmansk Venture*, pp. 2–6, 311. Later research has not been able to add much to General Maynard's explanation, though of course the Soviet historians have not agreed with his statement that the English had ample justification for their imperialist intervention in Russia.

93 PRO ADM 1–8550–29, Baltic/Arctic reports, Naval situation in the Arctic, February 1919.

A British squadron under Rear Admiral Edwyn Alexander-Sinclair⁹⁴ made a short visit to the eastern end of the Baltic Sea at the end of 1918 to give naval support to the local nationalists against the Bolsheviks. The British caught two Novik-class destroyers, the *Spartak* and *Avtroil*, of the Red fleet off Reval and gave them to Estonia,⁹⁵ and were congratulated for their further success by the recipients.⁹⁶ The Finnish government also offered icebreakers to help British warships at Reval in January 1919,⁹⁷ obviously with a wish to make the Royal Navy better disposed towards the import of grain into Finland. There was hunger in Finland after the two chaotic years of 1917 and 1918 (though not comparable to the famine in Russia), and American aid was badly needed, but did not arrive until 1919.

In spite of the Bolshevik recognition of Finnish independence on 31 December 1917, a state of war had existed between Finland and Russia since the Finnish civil war in 1918, though Finland did not officially intervene in the Russian civil war.

Mannerheim, who can be regarded as one of the Russian White generals,⁹⁸ might have dreamed of participating in the conquest of Petersburg to earn the gratitude of the future Russian White government, while the Finnish Activists deemed the situation favourable for promoting the Finnish liberation of the Finnish people in Russian Karelia. Now, in contrast to the Jäger years, the Activists were silently approved of by the industrialists, who dreamed of the immense virginal forests beyond the border.

After sporadic raids from Finland to Russian or East Karelia in 1918, in April 1919 a semi-official volunteer expedition went to Aunus (Olonets), the southern region of Karelia, to aid the inhabitants

94 With the light cruisers *Cardiff*, *Caradoc*, *Calypso*, and seven destroyers.

95 Rechristened the *Vambola* and *Lennuk*. Later the Estonians also took over the gunboats *Bobr*, *Sputnik* and *Imperator*, rechristening them the *Lembit*, *Laene* and *Vanemuine*. Conway's, p. 415.

96 PRO ADM 12 1620 Digest 52 Russia: Congratulatory Messages from Estonia, Protest by Russian Soviet Government against the capture of certain vessels by Estonian Provisional Government with the help of British forces in the Baltic.

97 PRO ADM 1620 A Digest 52 Russia, Carriage of Foodstuffs from America to Finland, 9 January 1919, Ice Breakers for warships arriving at Reval, offer of Finnish Government to place at the disposal of the Entente Powers 21 January 1919.

98 Luckett, *The White Generals*, pp. 125–153 "General Mannerheim and the Finnish victory"; pp. 299–306, 314–22 "Yudenich". Mannerheim had always maintained contact with his family in Finland and had no difficulty in becoming a Finn again.

against Russians, but the Red Army soon drove them back into two parishes in the vicinity of the Finnish border. There was also a rising in Viena, in the northern region of Karelia, with a few Finnish volunteers to help, perhaps even to instigate the movement. The British expedition with their local auxiliaries advanced from Murmansk southwards against the Bolsheviks. Their presence made clear to official Finland that annexation would be possible only with Western permission, which was not forthcoming. It seems that when foreign Powers had acknowledged the independence of Finland, while not defining its area, they had implied recognition only of the borders of the Grand Duchy, not ethnic Greater Finland. Thus no official support could be given to the volunteer expeditions to Aunus and Viena, though they received arms from the Finnish army.⁹⁹

An expedition to make Ingria Finnish also took place, but was easily repulsed by the Reds. Extending Finland to the very suburbs of Petersburg was an even more unrealistic attempt than trying to liberate Karelia.

Many of the Red Guards who had escaped from Finland in 1918 to Bolshevik Russia joined the Red Army to earn their living and fought on many fronts during the Russian civil war, first of all against the Finnish intruders in Karelia,¹⁰⁰ where they contributed to the restoration of the Bolshevik Empire in these bleak regions. Similar local detachments from various nationalities were seen on the many fronts in the Russian civil war, the most notorious of which were the Latvian riflemen. They were originally regiments in the Imperial army, which had joined the revolution as organized units and were used as life guards for Bolshevik dignitaries and as shock troops for the

99 Itkonen, *Muurmannin suomalainen legioona* (The Finnish Murmansk Legion), Nevakivi, *Muurmannin legioona; suomalaiset ja liittoutuneiden interventio Pohjois-Venäjälle 1918-1919* (The Murmansk Legion; Finns and the Allied Intervention in northern Russia); Churchill, *Itä-Karjalan kohtalo 1917-1922; Itä-Karjalan itsehallintokysymys Suomen ja Neuvosto-Venäjän välisissä suhteissa* (East Karelian Autonomy in Finnish-Soviet Relations). Nygård, *Itä-Karjalan pakolaiset 1917-1922* (East Karelian Refugees in Finland); Nygård, *Suomalainen äärioikeisto maailmansotien välillä* (The Finnish Extreme Right Between the World Wars).

100 "Finskie internatsionalisty", p. 628; "Internatsionalnye formirovaniia Krasnoi armii: 3-i finskii kommunisticheskii polk, 6-i finskii strel'kovyi polk, 480-i finskii strel'kovyi polk", p. 236. *Grazhdanskaia voina i voennaia interventsiiia v SSSR; entsyklopediia*. Salovaara, "Suomalaisrykmentit Venäjän kansalaissodassa" (Finnish Regiments in Russian Civil War).

Tsheka.¹⁰¹ One can only try and guess how the civil war in Finland might have ended if Bobrikov had not dissolved the Finnish rifle battalions in 1901; probably some of them could have survived the Great War and might have been infected by Bolshevism, as the whole Russian army was.

The Royal Navy takes over in the Baltic Sea

The Imperial German troops left Estonia by the end of 1918, destroying all communications and leaving the country in chaos. A red Estonian-Russian army advanced close on their heels. In January 1919, the British squadron with their gunfire aided the Estonians against the Bolsheviks, but were forced to withdraw by the approaching winter. The British also gave arms and munitions, but they had no land forces to help the Estonian Provisional government, which had difficulties in organizing defence forces of its own. Responding to a call for help, the Finnish government consented to send volunteers, in all nearly 4,000 men (regular troops were only then being organized in Finland and were necessary for the defence of the Finland's own borders). The Reds were soon pushed back, and after a landing by the Estonian navy, i.e. in captured Russian ships, led by Admiral Johan Pitka, Narva was taken on 17 January. Estonians and Finns also fought Latvian Bolsheviks while the Latvian army had to fight Russian Reds and Whites as well as the Germans on their southern border.

The Finnish expedition to Estonia was not meant so much as an act of Finnish expansion as help to a sister nation. But securing the southern side of the Gulf against a Russian re-conquest was in the Finnish interest, and the expedition also demonstrated a Finnish wish to side with the Western victors who were intervening in the Russian civil war and supporting the Baltic countries. The volunteers were not quite unanimous, nor perfectly disciplined; some of them wanted to liberate Petersburg, others would have preferred to destroy the city which had usurped Finnish land along the Neva, and one regiment even waged an independent war behind the Red lines. There was a big-brother attitude among many Finns towards their southern

101 Berzins, *The Latvian Riflemen*. – I am obliged to Dr Marko Nenonen for pointing out this book to me.

neighbours, very much irritating to the Estonians, as was also the loutish drunken behaviour of the Finnish volunteers in their free time.¹⁰²

Free Estonia was stabilized and the Provisional Government was replaced by a constituent assembly in April 1919. Another attack by the Bolsheviks was repelled in May.

In the navigation season of 1919, a stronger British naval detachment was sent to the Baltic, first to keep an eye on imperial German troops and Baltic German *Freikorps* in the Baltic Provinces (General von der Goltz among them). The Germans naturally enough regarded these provinces as their own, as they had since the thirteenth century. The feudal oppressors were resented by the local peoples and, as previous enemies, were suspect to Western governments. For a while, the Germans were tolerated, though not welcomed, to secure the local defence against the Reds, but after the Versailles treaty had been signed, they were repatriated in the autumn. Many Germans and Balts joined a 'West Russian army' established in Courland under Prince Bermond-Avaloff in the autumn of 1919, but the adventure ended in a total failure.¹⁰³

The Senior Naval Officer in the Baltic in 1919 was Rear Admiral Sir Walter Cowan, whose light cruisers had been based mainly at Harwich during the war years.¹⁰⁴ He took over Libau from the local German *Freikorps*, and also based some of his forces in Reval. Cowan

102 Sillanmäki, "Pohjan pojat Viroa vapauttamassa", *Sotilasaikakauslehti* 4/1997, pp. 58–63.

103 General von der Goltz dreamed of a German settlement of the 'rich empty fields' in the east, 'without hurting the Letts', and hoped with Bermond's help to restore Russia in German sphere of interest. von der Goltz, *Toimintani Suomessa ja Baltianmaissa* (My Mission in Finland and in the Baltic Provinces). For a Soviet Russian view, see: "Germanskaia interventsiiia v Pribaltike i Belorussii 1918" and "Germanskaia interventsiiia v Sovetskoi Rossii", *Grazhdanskaia voina i voennaia interventsiiia v SSSR: Entsiklopediia*, pp. 146–148.

104 Bennett, *Cowan's War*. – Before the Great War, Admiral Cowan had served with Kitchener in the Sudan, and he later retired in 1931 at the age of sixty, but in the Second World War rejoined an Indian Cavalry Regiment in the North African desert, escaped from an Italian prisoner of war camp, and continued his war with the Commandos on the Yugoslavian coast. cf. Fitzroy Maclean, *Eastern Approaches*, Penguin Books 1991 (1949). –

In all 238 ships were involved in the Baltic operations of 1918–20, HMS *Cardiff* being the flagship. The light cruisers *Ceres* and *Coventry* visited the Baltic 1918–19, the *Curacao* was damaged in May 1919, and the *Curlew*, *Danae*, and *Dragon* took part in operations in 1919, but it is difficult to compile a complete list in the absence of the relevant documents.

was instructed by the Admiralty to control trade in the Baltic Sea and to support British policy in the Baltic Provinces¹⁰⁵ – an order implying confidence in the ability of the Admiral, very different from the detailed instructions we have seen binding the Imperial Russian defenders of Finland. There were difficulties in deciding what was to be the British policy; the small Baltic states were useful allies against the Bolsheviks, but would have been an embarrassment if the expected revival of the Old Russia had taken place.¹⁰⁶

The first naval task, inherited from the Germans, was to sweep the navigation passages free from mines between the principal harbours of Danzig, Tallinn, Helsinki and Viipuri. Trade was thus made possible, and also allowed, between the Baltic countries and with neutral and allied countries, then also with Germany on ships under 1600 tons.¹⁰⁷

First, the British fleet mainly kept an eye on the unruly Germans in the Baltic provinces and their moves between Danzig and Libau, but soon the Admiral had more to worry about with the Bolshevik fleet. It is true that the Russian ships which had escaped from Helsinki to Kronstadt in the previous year suffered badly from lack of crews. Sailors, the 'flower of revolution', had been sent all over the vast country to stiffen the Red Guards and the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army against the White counter-revolution and foreign intervention.¹⁰⁸ With officers liquidated and the fleet under the sailors' mob rule, the ships were badly neglected.

Nevertheless, the Bolsheviks got over the loss of their destroyers and succeeded in raising steam in a few ships to form a *deistvuiushchii otriad sudov* or 'active detachment', the dreadnought *Petropavlovsk* among them.¹⁰⁹ They steamed towards the West, but turned back before they came within range of the British cruisers' guns. The Red ships probably tried to provoke the British to pursuit them into the

105 PRO ADM 12 1619 B 50 Orders for Force Operating, 24 May 1919.

106 So it is not quite fair to say that the policy was "a muddle", as Bradley, *Civil War in Russia 1917–1920* does, p. 144; it was the situation that was not clear.

107 PRO ADM 1 - 8550 -29 Baltic/Artic reports, 13 February 1919, 12 April 1919; Channels in Baltic and Gulf of Bothnia, publication of, to mariners, and navigation in; PRO ADM 12 1619 B 50 Gulf of Finland, preparation for minesweeping.

108 "V ognе revoliutsii", "V gody grazhdanskoi voiny", *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota*, vol. II, pp. 128–61, 162–244.

109 In addition to the *Petropavlovsk*, the old battleship *Pamiat Azova*, the cruiser *Oleg*, five destroyers and four submarines.

mine fields in the Gulf, where, indeed, the British did lose one cruiser and had another put out of action. Clashes first took place in May,¹¹⁰ and during the summer two destroyers and one submarine were lost to mines. The main British aim was to prevent the Bolsheviks from conquering the small Baltic countries and to aid the anti-Bolshevik Russian land forces.¹¹¹ Like their German predecessors, the British also hoped to capture Russian ships,¹¹² but the Bolshevik sailors had no intention of surrendering their vessels. In fact, discipline was improved in the Red fleet under Trotskii, though their ships remained few in number and lacking in operational ability. The British captured a few run-down ships discarded by the retreating Russian fleet in the previous year.

In order better to keep an eye on the Bolshevik fleet in Kronstadt, a base was organized at Koivisto with the permission of the Finnish government. Permission was gladly accorded, and the local authorities did their best to help their British guests. The Finns were happy and, in fact, also lucky in having lost both their Russian Imperial connection and their German friends, who were replaced by the naval British Empire, much more disinterested and less oppressive – or at least more distant, and in fact rather weak in 1919.

The Finns eagerly to their their originally, basically Western orientation (the West had comprised of Germany as well as of France and England). The Allies only demanded that the Finns desist from the German orientation in their foreign and internal policy. The Finnish Social Democratic party had been revived in the autumn of 1918, undisturbed by the Red radicals, who were at the time establishing their own Finnish Communist Party in Moscow. In free elections in the spring of 1919, moderate republican parties – Liberals, Agrarians, and Social Democrats – won a majority in Parliament.

110 PRO ADM 12 1620 Digest 52 Russia: Action Between Bolshevik and HM Ships May 31st, increased efficiency of the Bolshevik naval forces.

111 The most recent Russian naval historiography regards the activity of the Red fleet as a defence against the attack organized by the Western Powers in support of Koltshak's operations in Siberia, of Estonian and Russian White attempts on Petersburg and Finnish White action in Olonets, v. *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota*, vol. II, pp. 172–73. There is no sense in discussing whether any operation is aggression or defence, but the Finnish expedition to Olonets was not at all approved of by the West. It has obviously been difficult for the Russian naval writers to liberate historiography from war-time suspicions and Soviet propagandist views.

112 PRO ADM 12 1619 B 50, 20 April 1919, Disposal of Bolshevik Fleet in event of Capture.

Finland was no longer purely White, to the regret of the former Activists and Jägers.

Britain acknowledged Finland as an independent country on 6 May 1919, the USA on 7 May, and France reconfirmed her recognition on 12 May. Finland was recognized as it had existed as a Grand Duchy, i.e. including Åland, but with no encouragement for the annexation of East Karelia. The constitutionalist liberal leader K.J. Ståhlberg was elected President on 25 July 1919, while only a minority supported Mannerheim, the other candidate.

Though not intervening in Russian affairs, Finland did not abstain from friendly moves towards the British, as we saw above. A Finnish flotilla of light craft was also based at Koivisto, where the *Waffenbrüderschaft* of the previous summer evidently did not disturb the new comradeship-in-arms. In minesweeping operations, the Finnish navy suffered their first losses, too, but did not take part in fighting the Russians at sea.

399

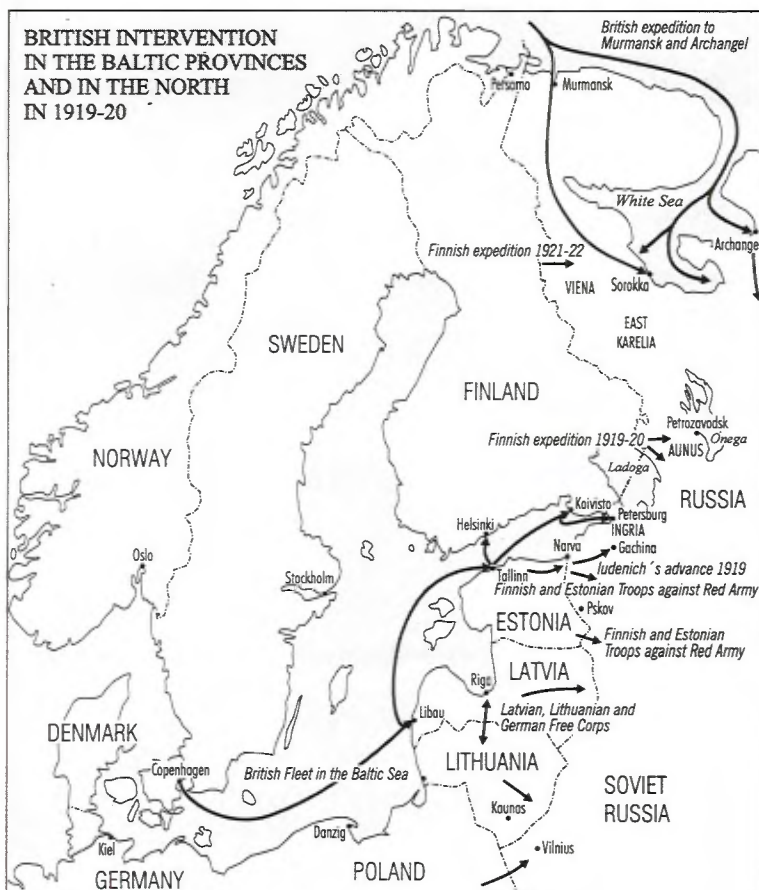
Feats of light forces

The British used Coastal Motor Boats for secret-service operations. Agents boarded the boats at Koivisto or Terijoki and were landed behind the Red lines.¹¹³ The importance of such ventures is difficult to estimate; they probably did not achieve much, but kept the *Tsheka* on its toes until it was able to undermine and destroy all opposition in Bolshevik Russia.

Cautious Finnish politicians regarded good relations with the future Russian White government as important, but no intervention against the Red usurpers was undertaken. The Finnish leaders demanded guarantees for Finland's independence, the annexation of East Karelia, and the Arctic harbour of Petsamo as preconditions for any intervention. As the Russian White leaders refused to acknowledge even Finland's separation from the Empire, not to speak of any Greater Finland, no operations could be undertaken to aid them.

In June 1919, encouraged by rumours of the approach of the British fleet and White Russian forces from Estonia, the crew of the Bolshevik fort at Krasnaia Gorka revolted. Red ships from Kronstadt bombarded

113 Agar, *Baltic Episode, A Classic of Secret Service in Russian Waters*. A nice book, written in the style of the best boys' spy stories.



British intervention in the Baltic Provinces and in the North in 1919-20.

After their victory in the West, the Allies replaced the German influence in the Baltic region to fight the Red menace, but their operations were complicated by lack of sufficient strength and by local nationalist ambitions.

the fort and Russian Whites demanded British help for the rebels. Because of the minefields, ships could not be sent close enough, and after a while the fort was taken by the Bolsheviks and the rebels massacred.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ It is true, though, that *Tri veka rossiiskogo flota* vol. II, p. 175 does not know

During the summer, the British continued their operations against the Red fleet. At the end of July 1919, they attempted an air attack with seaplanes from HMS *Vindictive* on Kronstadt to bomb Bolshevik ships. The fragile aircraft with their small bombs and without bomb sights did not cause much damage, but the pilots took photographs of the naval harbour, and the attack drew the attention of the defenders to the sky, instead of to the horizon.

British MCB's from Koivisto, led by Lieutenant Commander Augustus Agar, had succeeded in torpedoing the Bolshevik armoured cruiser *Oleg* on the night of 16–17 June. Admiral Cowan decided to make an end of the Bolshevik threat in the Gulf with this new promising weapon.

The raid was carried out on 18 August to immobilize the heavy ships of the Bolshevik fleet so that Cowan's cruisers would be able to deal with the lighter ships. The attack succeeded, the defenders were surprised, the *Pamiat Azova* was sunk, the *Petropavlovsk* damaged, as was the pre-dreadnought battleship *Andrei Pervozvannyi*.¹¹⁵ A couple of CMB's were lost and a few of their crews arrested by the Bolsheviks, freed only after long and difficult efforts by the British Foreign Office. Of the intended victims, the dreadnought *Respublika* was not hit, nor were the armoured cruisers *Riurik* or *Baian*; but it seems that the attack discouraged the Red sailors, because no further naval activity of the Red fleet could be observed for a long time afterwards. The CMB's also mined access passages to Kronstadt, and on 21 October the destroyers *Azard* and *Gavriil* were sunk by these mines.

Again, the approaching winter compelled the British ships to withdraw from the eastern end of the Baltic. The last ships left Koivisto on 28 December, at the last moment, indeed; at the request of Admiral Cowan to the Finnish President, the Finns stayed one day more, and lost three of their eggshell torpedo boats crushed by ice, without any loss of life.¹¹⁶

Meanwhile, Russian counter-revolutionary attempts had been organized by General Iudenich with his staff in Helsinki but with

anything about the fate of the rebels.

115 PRO ADM 12 1620 A Digest 52 Russia, Attack, Cronstadt Naval Harbour, Report of SNO, Baltic, on combined sea and air on, 18 August 1919.

116 Thus they did not spend "an extremely uncomfortable" winter frozen in, as Agar said, p. 251.

troops in Estonia, encouraged by a British military mission led by General Sir Herbert Gough. In July 1919, Iudenich's troops together with Estonian and Ingrian detachments, supported by Estonian warships on the Gulf flank, advanced from Narva to Gatchina, but had to retreat before a Bolshevik counterattack, until the main body of Estonian troops were transferred from Latvia to stop the Reds.

General Iudenich tried a new offensive towards Petersburg in the autumn. Again Jaama (Iamburg), Gatchina, and Krasnoe Selo were approached as well as Krasnaia Gorka from the sea, but the Bolsheviks fought off the attack at the end of October 1919. In November, Iudenich's troops were dissolved, and a Russian-Estonian cease-fire came into force on 31 December.

Cowan regarded the Baltic situation as stabilized and sent most of his cruisers home, while the remaining squadron was based in Copenhagen.

Finns and Estonians praised the assistance given by the British fleets,¹¹⁷ and were extremely sorry to see the Royal Navy leaving their neighbourhood, because they felt the need of British assistance in organizing their defence against Bolshevik Russia.¹¹⁸ They asked that part of the Baltic force should winter in the Gulf of Finland, or even that a few ships should be permanently posted in either capital, Helsinki or Tallinn, but to this the Admiralty did not consent.¹¹⁹

The Finns had been very strongly pro-German up to 1918, and their strong feelings in 1919 for the Entente may be wondered at. In his memoirs, Captain Agar explains that the sympathy of the Finns and Estonians for Cowan was due to the fact that the Admiral was there to work for their national independence.¹²⁰

Of course, Britain did not work for Finnish or Estonian independence, but for her own interests, nor had the Finns been so much pro-German or pro-Entente as pro-Finland. Because of their

117 PRO ADM 12 1620 B Digest 52 Russia, Publication of article 9 December in Finnish papers on praising assistance given by HH Ships.

118 PRO ADM 12 1620 A Digest 52 Russia Finnish Navy, As to instruction of __, request for British Assistance, 4 September 1919.

119 PRO ADM 12 1620 A Digest 52 Russia Baltic withdrawal of British Naval Forces, Finnish opinion 17 September; Re peace negot. Soviet and Estonia, request that some of HM ships may be sent from Copenhagen to Reval, Admiralty cannot bind themselves to maintaining HM ships indefinitely at Reval 18 December 1919; British squadron in Estonian Waters, Estonian Government request that MH Government will prolong the stay of the __, 5 December 1919.

120 Agar, p. 240.

worry about a Russian restoration or revival they sought support wherever they could find it, and so did the Baltic nations.¹²¹

A still-born Empire

There was yet another attempt at an Empire to replace Germany and Russia in the Baltic region. Under Jozef Pilsudski, the reborn Poland dreamed of restoring her ancient greatness. The twenty-seven million Poles were the biggest nation in East Central Europe, but felt inferior and uncertain between twice as many Germans and four times more numerous Russians. Pilsudski in Warsaw planned a federation of Poles, Lithuanians, Latvians, White Russians and Ukrainians, strong enough to withstand the pressure from either side. He seems to have thought that Finland in the north was the second nation in strength, having cleared up its own internal upheaval in the spring of 1918, having long traditions of national self-government, an army tried in battle, and enjoying international recognition. Poland might have supported a Finnish annexation of East Karelia at the time Poland was acquiring the borders it had had before 1772. To make the plan even more palatable to the Finns, Pilsudski proposed leaving Estonia in a Finnish sphere of interest, and forming a Finno-Polish tutelage over Latvia.

The scheme was launched successfully. At Versailles, Germany was made to give Posnania and Upper Silesia to Poland, and Danzig made a 'free' city to create access to the sea for Poland. In the east, Russia's internal chaos made Poles confident of their ability to take the Ukraine, White Russia and Lithuania.

A certain interest in Pilsudski's scheme was shown in Helsinki,¹²² and Konstantin Päts, the Estonian Prime Minister, might have consented to co-operation with Finland because it could have increased Estonia's security against Germany and Russia. But he would hardly have countenanced the subordination suggested by Pilsudski.

121 Polvinen, *Paasikivi, valtiomiehen elämäntyö* (The Life of Paasikivi, the Statesman), vol. II, pp. 23-89 a most solid and balanced treatment of the peace negotiations.

122 Hovi, Olavi, *The Baltic Area in British Policy, 1918-1921*; vol. I: from the Compiègne Armistice to the Versailles Treaty, 11.11.1918-20.1.1920; Hovi, Kalervo, *Cordon sanitaire or barrière de l'est? The emergence of the new French eastern European alliance policy 1917-1919*; Hovi, Kalervo, *Interessensphären im Baltikum; Finnland im Rahmen der Ostpolitik Polens 1919-1922*.

In March 1920, war broke out between Poland and Red Russia. The Poles advanced to Kiev in May and their grandiose plans seemed to be coming true, but then in July the Red Army drove the Poles almost back to Warsaw. However, the Red Army had overstretched its forces, too, and with French advisers and munitions the Bolshevik hordes were beaten back. Greater Poland remained a dream, but neither had the World Revolution advanced. The Bolshevik regime covered a diminished Russian Empire and had to be satisfied with constructing Socialism in one country only.

The Royal Navy was still present on the Baltic Sea, but these inland adventures were of more concern to the French with their idea of establishing a little Entente to provide support against a future German threat.

Free from the threat in the West, and after the increasingly war-weary interventionists had desisted from their attempts, the Red Army chased away the last White troops from the Crimea.

The nations in Russia's former western frontier provinces realized that the Bolshevik power was permanently established in the Kremlin. A Russian-Estonian peace treaty was signed on 2 February 1920, the border drawn roughly along the ethnic divide of Estonians and Russians.

In 1920, Estonia was able to revive from the long struggle – from Bolshevik agitation, from masses of refugees, from internal political uncertainty, and from undue Finnish influence. Its constitution was confirmed on 16 June and in January 1921 Konstantin Päts was elected President, *Riigivanem*.

The West had taken their time before recognizing Estonian as well as Latvian and Lithuanian independence *de jure*, waiting for a White restoration in Russia and perhaps a federation of the various separating parts of the former Empire. When it was clear that no Russian White power could be resurrected and that the Entente peoples had no wish to continue intervention in the east, Britain's remaining interest was stability in the Baltic region and free trade with the countries there. France tried to erect a *cordon sanitaire* of small border states against the Red epidemic after the weakness of the White counter-revolution became apparent. Estonia was recognized *de jure* by France 26 January 1921.

The Lithuanian-Soviet peace treaty was signed on 12 July 1920, and the Latvian-Soviet one on 11 August. In the Russian-Polish peace treaty of Riga on 12 October 1920, White Russia and the Ukraine were divided between the two powers. Polish troops took Vilna from the Lithuanians, who had to make Kaunas (Kovno) their capital.

Russo-Finnish negotiations had also been started but they were

delayed, because of the quarrel about national self-determination in East Karelia as well as the discussion of the neutralization of a few small Finnish islands in the Gulf of Finland in the passages to Kronstadt. It was only after the Poles had been chased out of Kiev that the Helsinki government desisted from their dreams. With the position of the Bolshevik government ever stronger, Finland had to give up even the two parishes still occupied by Finns in East Karelia. In the Karelian Isthmus, the border remained where it had stood since 1812, only twenty miles from Petersburg, and access to Petsamo on the Arctic coast was given to Finland as promised by Alexander II in 1864. The border between the Imperial and the Grand Ducal administrations was transformed into an international border. The Finnish-Russian peace treaty was signed on 14 October 1920.¹²³

Finnish nationalist adventurers tried to seize Viena between October 1921 and February 1922, but their attempt did not attract even semi-official support and was doomed to fail. This venture had no imperialist backing from the West, as was believed by the suspicious Russians even seventy years later in their historiography.¹²⁴

A Greater Finland could not be realized, and was not, in fact, even attempted seriously, excepting by rather weak extreme nationalists, who had no support in the moderate centre and left parties, i.e. Progressive Liberals, Agrarians, and Social Democrats.

The story of alien Imperial armed forces in Finland ends with the present chapter, since in 1919–20 no Russian armed forces, Imperial, Bolshevik or White, existed in Finland, except in East Karelia if this area is accepted as part of ethnic Finland. Happily, the German Empire had fallen, too. After having materially aided in sweeping away the confused remains of the previous Empires, the Royal Navy of the British Empire had left their bases in Helsinki and Koivisto at the end of 1919, and even their indirect influence diminished with the disarmament in the West after the Versailles peace treaty. Apparently at the height of their power after the victory in the Great War, the British had in fact exhausted their economic and industrial strength and stood at the beginning of their Imperial decline.¹²⁵

123 Jukka-Pekka Pietiäinen, "Suomen ulkopolitiikan alku" (The Beginning of Finnish Foreign Policy), *Itsenäistymisen vuodet 1917–1920*, vol. III, pp. 252–472.

124 "Interventsiia antanty na severe", *Grazhdanskaia voina i interventsiia v SSSR*, *Entsyklopediia*, p. 232.

125 Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery*, p. 315.

Conclusion

The Imperial Russian army and navy were garrisoned in Finland in 1808–1918, for 110 years. The garrison was not strong, at least in the opinion of its commanders. There were frequent changes, but usually, in time of peace, there was one infantry division, increased to an army corps when necessary. The country far to the North beyond the Baltic Sea was in fact not tempting enough for any naval enemy as long as the defending forces maintained their cohesion and discipline, which in turn depended on the vitality of the Imperial regime in Russia.

The strategic aim of the Finnish and Russian troops in Finland and the Baltic fleet was to defend St Petersburg against an enemy who might try to land in Finland and advance towards the Imperial capital, as Sweden had done in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. On paper, in the Russian war plans, Finland was not to be defended for her own sake, because the country was important mainly in closing the approaches from the Baltic Sea through the Gulf of Finland, while the western parts of the country were considered too distant and strategically unimportant. But when real war broke out in 1914, the foremost defence-line was pushed to the very coast, although rear positions were also prepared in case retreat became necessary.

The task of the garrison had also been to defend the throne, that is social order and Imperial sovereignty. The Russian presence in Finland was not an occupation, and even less a reign of terror. Killing people is the business of soldiers, but the Imperial Finnish and Russian troops did not need to kill anyone if, by their mere presence, they fulfilled their purpose here: they reminded the population of the respect that was due to the regime; military force was always the last resort in securing social and political order.

The Russians in Finland were rather isolated from local society, not so much by their military profession as by their religion, language and culture. Russian enlisted men always remained aliens among the Finns. At first, among the gentry or aristocracy, no ethnic difference existed, but with the emergence of nationalism the Finns drew aloof from the Russians. Finnish detachments were first included in the Imperial army, but after 1878, while the national service battalions

belonged to the Imperial armed forces, they were no longer part of the Russian army.

There were everyday commercial relations between the garrisons and their surrounding communities, few marriages but numerous shorter liaisons, often for pecuniary consideration. The army was also used for marking occasions of Imperial importance with parades, which were demonstrations of force, with a political and military purpose, but also esthetically satisfying and emotionally inspiring. The barracks were part of the garrison town architecture and monumental proofs of Imperial might. The military bands revived musical culture in Finland, military training was part of education in the country, strategic necessities dictated the direction of some of Finland's railways, the army and navy bought many things in the country – from ships to nails – and paid for them, even if they also made the Finnish State pay millions into the Imperial treasury. A few soldiers of the army remained in the country and became Finns, a few more left their genes in bastard children to increase the number and the quality of the population, while many Finns also served in the Empire and reached high positions there; some of them became Russified but many maintained ties with the country of their origin.

Not many military or naval men emerged from the mass – in the documents – as individuals; war plans and memoranda, though signed, were identical in their contents, details, and style. Only those who were detached from the purely military sphere came to be known in the country, for example, Ramsay, Bobrikov, Schauman, Seyn or Mannerheim. The presence of the troops in the country did not cause any perceptible degree of Russification even if a few tradesmen in the garrison towns learned some Russian. The few Russians or other nationalities who settled in the country after their service, were apt to become Finns over the years.

The essential feature of an army, corps, division or regiment, is that it is an organized and disciplined hierarchy. It is not an horde or a mob, and it acts as ordered, not on its own initiative. Most of the lower ranks probably had not chosen to come to Finland, far away from their homes, but were ordered there by the Emperor and his generals, and their feelings and thoughts were not recorded in the official army and navy documents. A detailed social, demographic and economic as well as everyday history of the Russian garrison remains to be written.

Russia's conflicts in other directions caused difficulties for Finland, too, though Finns had not much interest in the Near, Middle or Far East. The Imperial Russian navy had not been strong enough to

prevent the 'naval enemy' from harming Finnish merchant fleet and harbours in 1854–55, but in 1914–17, though the dreadnoughts were a wasted effort, the Baltic fleet kept the aggressor away from the Gulf of Finland with modern weapons – minefields and heavy coastal guns. The enemy did not dare to approach the Finnish coasts until 1918, when the Imperial army no longer existed.

Finland formed a glacis for the defence of St Petersburg. To secure this purpose, the country was administered separately from the Russian ministries, which guaranteed peace in the border country and the loyalty of its inhabitants. Finland in turn was protected by the Imperial might, and the border country was able to live in peace for more than one hundred years and grow from a Swedish province into what was in fact a Finnish national state under Russian sovereignty. Modern stimuli came via St Petersburg and, increasingly, directly from the West.

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The loyalty of the Finns proved in 1854–55 made it possible for the Monarch to grant them an increasingly autonomous political system, which reinforced their national identity. When the Russian authorities noticed their mistake, it was too late; Finnish nationalism could not be revoked by the methods of the tsarist regime. It is probable, though, that the development of Finnish nationalism would have resulted in separatism, whatever the Russian policy might have been; this was, after all, the era of nationalism everywhere. Perhaps the 'Russian oppressor' was necessary for educating the Finns into a nation.

From 1891, the Imperial government, nervous because of the separate national development of Finland, tried to extinguish separatism in the autonomous system of administration and make it an obedient organ of Russian power. The inhabitants of Finland had no intention of rising against their monarch until they thought that Nicholas II had broken his oath to respect the Finnish constitution. The juridical substance of the constitution was hazy, and totally contradictory views were held on it by Finnish constitutionalists and Russian nationalists at the end of the nineteenth century. From that time onwards the military staffs had no end of trouble in preparing countermeasures against supposed separatists, whose separatism had, in fact, been provoked by the measures themselves. The measures planned against a rising were not applicable to the general strike in 1905. After that, until the war broke out, the memory of the paralyzing strike gave no peace to the generals, who had to plan for a war on two fronts, against the Finns and the Germans.

Finns, who had been used to thinking that their country was an

autonomous state in union with Russia, abandoned their loyalty towards their perjurer monarch, and by 1914 some Finns would have preferred the German enemy to the Russian defender of the country. However, for a while, the Russian army made all separatism hopeless, in spite of the growing dissatisfaction and separatism among the inhabitants; the Jäger movement in 1915–16 was a desperate gamble. Until the end of the summer of 1917, the Imperial navy – with its fleet and coastal fortresses – kept the enemy away from Finnish coasts and the army maintained Russian sovereignty in the country.

The 22nd Army Corps, trained to defend the border country, was sent to die on other, more important fronts, and its successor, the 42nd Corps, was never tested in battle. It seems that even at its strongest it had too few troops dispersed too far from each other, guarding every possible direction, difficult to assemble in a counter-strike had the enemy appeared. Fortunately for the corps, the Germans could spare no thought, ships or troops for a flanking operation over the Baltic Sea and through Finland against St Petersburg, nor did the Swedes ever intend to join their Germanic kinsmen of the Central Powers.

Though spared the experience of trench warfare, the personnel of the 42nd Corps changed often enough to be infected by the general war-weariness of their compatriots. Soldiers at the front were not the most eager revolutionaries, but men in the rear detachments and ships at anchor were the first to refuse to obey orders; this made revolution possible.

Happily for the Finnish nation, the 'Finnish question', *finliandskii vopros*, was a symptom or one example of the innumerable and intractable problems with which the tsarist regime was faced. Russia could not be transformed into a modern unified national state, and acting a great power involved the Empire in the Great War, which only increased the problems so that the whole Empire with its army faced dissolution in 1917. Finns, deemed unworthy of military service, were spared the massacres on the Eastern Front, but could not escape the economic and social strains caused by the war, or the consequent revolution.

The constitutional self-government, slowly developed from 1809 to 1899, was gladly restored by the Provisional Government in the spring of 1917, but soon the revolution turned more radical and violent.

The dissolution of the Imperial regime transformed the disciplined troops into soldier mobs and let loose their potential of violence. First, sailors of the Baltic fleet killed their officers, and then, in the autumn, a few soldiers joined Finnish hooligans in killing about thirty members of the bourgeoisie, and there was plenty of less extreme violence. The

power vacuum was instantly filled by rival volunteer guards from the different components of Finnish society, and speeded up their polarization towards a civil war. The soldiers and sailors had no quarrel with the Finns; most of the killing was done by Finns themselves in 1918.

Though unable to prevent social problems sharpening, the Western inheritance rendered possible the divorce from Russia in constitutional order and at the right historical moment, when Russia was at its weakest. The tradition was also strong enough to restore an organically developing social order instead of a radical Socialist experiment under Bolshevik influence.

The weakening of the Russian Empire made German aspirations grow so that in 1917 Finland was included in their war aims and in 1918 they sent their forces to intervene in the Civil War. The operation coincided rather well with the earlier expectations of the Russian defence plans, only there was no longer any one to deny access to the invader.

The main importance of the German armed intervention was to shorten the Finnish Civil War, to make the White victory definite, and to expel the numerically strong Russian Baltic fleet from the country. The German presence was welcomed by the Whites as a guarantee against a future revival of Russian power or popular disorder. Because the Germans were defeated elsewhere, they never had the chance to fulfil their own plans of domination in the country, so that Finns remained thankful for their unselfish help, and hoped for more, in vain in 1939–40, but successfully in 1941–44, against the same enemy.

The British and the French Imperial armed forces in 1854–55 caused havoc on Finnish coasts and among Finnish ships, which made Finns more loyal and trusted subjects of their Grand Duke.

In 1914–18, the British Empire had no immediate influence on Finland, but it contributed, together with Russia, France and America, to the German fall in 1918, which freed the Finns from their protectors.

In 1919–20 it was the turn of the British Empire to dominate the Baltic, but they had no reason to intervene in Finland after the country had dissociated itself from Germany, and allowed the Royal Navy to use its harbours and bases to attack Red Kronstadt and control the capitulated Germans. Great Britain seemed at the peak of her power, victorious in the Great War, and previous German colonies now coloured pink on the map. In fact, Britain, too, was exhausted by the four years of total war. Britain sent its navy but no army contingents

to the Baltic, and the very small detachments in other theatres of the Russian civil war were soon withdrawn.

History does not end at any 'historical' moment, but the ensuing events are outside the limits of the present story.¹ Russia was for two decades involved in her internal social experiments and it was only in 1939 that she could attempt to take back what she had lost. Thus, for a while, the border states were left independent and without the presence of any alien armed forces; they formed part of the Western world into which they had grown during the previous millennium.

It is not certain that history has any direction or meaning; perhaps it just happens. There is no way of knowing what might have been the result if there had been no Russian garrison in Finland. With enormous sums of money, metal and men, perhaps even more of paper, the Empire had garrisoned its border country for eleven decades and secured the Imperial capital. The subject people was allowed to grow into a nation, but in the end tsarism managed to create an image of a hateful Russian in Finnish minds. The White Finn was probably equally hateful for the Reds. The memory of the difficult final phase of the Russian period in Finnish history troubled the Finnish-Russian relations for a long time afterwards.

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One of the impulses for writing this story was hearing the allegation that the Russian oppression in Finland was due to military reasons. I hope that I have been able to show in this book what were the military reasons behind the Imperial policy in the border country both before and during the said period; that it was not understood in the military staffs as oppression; that the soldiers and generals were not able to dictate the Russian policy though they were part of the governmental machinery; and that the military policy was partly formed by nationalist feelings, not only by rational considerations.

But explanations are always partial and tentative, seldom conclusive, sometimes ridiculous; in the end, history may be inexplicable: "one damn thing after another"². The hasty and crude Marxist theory went out of fashion with its sponsors, the Soviet tank divisions, and it seems that the conclusion of an evolution scientist is

1 For an up-to-date (August 1997) review of recent research of Soviet-Nordic relations, see: *Sovjetunionen och Norden – konflikt, kontakt, influenser*. Historialinen Arkisto 110:1, red. Sune Jungar & Bent Jensen. Finska Historiska Samfundet, Helsingfors 1997.

2 as a critic described my writing.

applicable to history, too: "Reality in all its messy particularity is too complicated to theorize about [...] we can be certain that there are realms of no doubt fascinating and important knowledge that our species [...] will never enter [...] because the Heat Death of the universe will overtake us before we get there".³

3 Daniel C. Dennett, *Darwin's Dangerous Idea; Evolution and the Meanings of Life*, Penguin Books 1996 (Allen Lane, London 1995), p. 383, 497.

Annex

NAVY UNITS DURING THE WINTER OF 1916-1917

Source: RGAVMF, fond 418, opis 1,
delo 515, svedeniia o zimnoi
dislokatsii sudov Baltiiskogo flota 20.
II 1917

HELSINKI

1st brigade (dreadnoughts)

- Petropavlovsk
- Sevastopol
- Gangut
- Poltava

IIInd brigade (pre-dreadnoughts)

- Andrei Pervozvannyi
- Imperator Pavel I
- Slava

2nd cruiser brigade

- Gromoboi
- Rossiia
- Diana

2nd destroyer division

- Desna
- Azard
- Samson

3rd destroyer division

- Leitenant Il'in
- Kapitan Izilmet'ev

5th destroyer division

- Emir Bukharskii
- Finn
- Moskvitianin

6th destroyer division

- Vsadnik
- Gaidamak
- Amurets
- Ussuriets
- Turkmenets Stavropolskii
- Donskoi Kazak
- Ukrainets

7th destroyer division

- Voiskovoi
- Vynoslivyi
- Vnimatelnyi

- Inzhener-Mekhanik Dmitriev
- Inzhener-Mekhanik Zver'ev
- Vnushitelnyi

- Burnyi
- Boevoi

8th destroyer division

- Molodetskii
- Krepkii
- Legkii
- Metkii

- Lovkii
- Iskusnyi
- Likhoi

9th destroyer

- Stroinyi
- Storozhevyi
- Silnyi
- Raziashchii

- Delnyi
- Deiatelnyi
- Rastropnyi
- Vidnyi

- Groziashchii

auxiliaries of destroyer division

- transport Kama
- transport Oka
- Vodoleino 2
- gunboat Khivinet

- auxiliary Tshaika
- auxiliary Astarte
- auxiliary Krechet

1st guardship division

- Kortun
- auxiliary Kobaiak

2nd guardship division

- Varsun
- Vidra
- Kinita
- Sobol
- Gornostyi

3rd guardship division

- minesweeper Kitoboi
- minesweeper Nevod
- minesweeper Named
- minesweeper Garpun

- minesweeper Iakor
- 4th guardship division
- minelayer Deksna
- minelayer Lovat
- transport Vyterga
- auxiliaries for guardships
- steamer Zeia
- steamer Buria
- steamer Irtysh
- detachment of minelayers
- minelayer Narova
- minelayer Amur
- minelayer Usta
- minelayer Lena

auxiliaries for minelayers

- blockship no. 2
- blockship no. 4
- blockship no. 9
- barge no. 44
- barge no. 49
- steamer no. 1
- barge no. 5
- 1st minesweeper division
- auxiliary no. 214
- auxiliary no. 215
- auxiliary no. 216
- auxiliary no. 217
- auxiliary no. 218
- auxiliary no. 219
- auxiliary no. 220
- auxiliary no. 222
- 2nd minesweeper division
- minesweeper Udarnik
- minesweeper Zapal
- minesweeper Minrep
- minesweeper Sashchitnik
- 4th minesweeper division
- minesweeper no. 18
- minesweeper no. 19
- minesweeper no. 22
- minesweeper no. 103
- minesweeper Kometa
- Cheka
- 5th minesweeper division
- minesweeper no. 2
- 6th minesweeper division
- minesweeper no. 8
- 8th minesweeper division
- minesweeper Alesha Popovich
- minesweeper Sviatogor
- auxiliaries for minesweeper divisions
- transport Zaryv
- hospital ship Nautilus
- steamer no. 6
- communications service

- auxiliary Porazhaiushchii
- auxiliary no. 104
- auxiliary no. 119
- training ship no. 120
- auxiliary Nevka
- freighter detachment
- coaler Az
- coaler Buka
- coaler Vedy
- coaler Glagol
- coaler Dobro
- coaler Est'
- coaler Zhivoto
- coaler Zemlia
- coaler Izo
- coaler Kako
- coaler Leda
- coaler Mistede
- coaler Nash
- coaler Pokoi
- coaler Rtsy
- coaler Slovo
- coaler Tverdo
- coaler Anadyr
- ammunition transport Riga
- ammunition transport Snariad
- refrigerator ship Velikii Kniaz Aleksandr Mikhailovich
- repair ship Tatiana
- repair ship Tamara
- barge Aramais
- transport Alfavit
- transport Alfa
- transport Shcha
- Sveaborg fortress patrol
- harbour ship no. 1
- harbour ship no. 2
- harbour ship no. 3
- harbour ship no. 4
- harbour ship no. 5
- harbour ship no. 6
- harbour ship Stokfors
- harbour ship Sekret
- harbour ship Loviza
- harbour ship no. 142
- firefighting guardship Transgrund
- firefighting guardship Ahkera
- firefighting guardship Vuola
- firefighting guardship Moriak
- firefighting guardship Zaiava
- icebreaker Tarmo
- icebreaker Gorod Revel
- 1st detachment of transport flotilla
- transport Graf Tolstoi
- 2nd detachment of transport flotilla
- transport Vindava

- transport Gogland
- transport General Dragomirov
- transport Myza
- transport Kodyma
- transport Linel'
- transport Merkurii
- transport Mikhail Lund
- transport Mitava
- transport Nargen
- transport General Skobelev
- 3rd detachment of transport flotilla
 - transport Vera
 - transport Dagmar
 - transport Gagara
 - transport Rus'
 - transport Sekret
 - transport Hera
 - transport Hektor
 - netlayer Ob
- 4th detachment of transport flotilla
 - transport Burlak
 - transport Vyborg
 - transport Vaza
 - transport Dolli
 - transport Kaleva
 - transport Tor
- auxiliaries
 - hospital ship Ariadne
- hydrographic department
 - transport Opisnoi
 - transport Promernyi
 - special auxiliary OreI
- harbour ship Slavianka
- harbour ship Mina
- harbour ship Bura
- transport Azimut
- auxiliary Biorneborg
- motor boat Indeks
- rescue patrol
 - rescue ship Asistans
 - rescue ship Protektor
 - rescue ship Hero
- pilot department
 - yacht Ekenes
 - steamer Kurs
 - steamer Sekstan
 - steamer Iupiter
- Finnish customs department
 - steamer Vartio
- Peter the Great Fortress waterfront
 - icebreaker Truvor
 - steamer Finland
 - lightship Nekmangrund
 - lightship Snimav
 - steamer Astrea
 - steamer Bastis

- steamer Egir
- tug Chernomorskii no. 1
- tug Chernomorskii no. 2
- tug Chernomorskii no. 3
- tug Halla no. 6
- tug Halla no. 7

HANKO

1st submarine division

- Bars
- Gepard
- Vepr
- Volk
- transport Tosno
- gunboat Giliak

1st patrol ship division

- auxiliary Iastreba

2nd patrol ship division

- Voron

minelayer detachment

- minelayer Svir

8th minesweeper division

- minesweeper Ilia Muromets
- minesweeper Potok Bogatyr
- minesweeper Mikula
- minesweeper Dobrynia

communications service

- harbour ship Silaia

Peter the Great Fortress waterfront

- lightship Libavskii

special hydrographic service

- harbour ship Posilnyi
- steamer Soldat

KOTKA

- harbour ship Eros
- harbour ship Il'za

LAPPOHJA

- harbour ship Tral'
- harbour ship Gorizont

TURKU

4th submarine division

- Minoga
- Makrel'
- Feldmarshal Graf Sheremet'ev
- Kasatka
- transport Khabarovsk
- auxiliary Sputnik
- gunboat Bobr'
- minesweeper Il'men
- blockship no. 3
- auxiliary Roksana
- auxiliary Stvol
- auxiliary no. 128

- auxiliary no. 129
- transport Kivito
- transport Kimito
- steamer no. 4
- steamer no. 7
- patrol boat Pumba
- patrol boat Lamfa
- patrol boat Sneg
- patrol boat Led
- patrol boat Nyrok
- patrol boat Mezen'
- 1st transport division
- auxiliary no. 212
- auxiliary no. 213
- 4th transport division
- minesweeper n:o 7
- communications service
- harbour ship Skatudden
- harbour ship Gel'singfors
- motor boat Karpo-Kalk
- motor boat Klio
- motor boat Inio
- transport Tse
- tug Revel-Riga
- transport Alinda
- special hydrographic service
- harbour ship Sever
- harbour ship Vostok
- harbour ship Zapad
- harbour ship Kartushka
- motor boat Vazis'
- motor boat Viushka
- pilot department
- icebreaker Murtaja
- steamer Volna
- steamer Tral'
- steamer Vil'manstrand
- steamer Valvoja
- Finnish customs department
- steamer Aura
- steamer Falken
- steamer Vesta
- steamer Nordner
- icebreaker Avans
- steamer Dragsford

MARIEHAMN

- submarine division
- auxiliary Okhrannyi
- auxiliary Temernik
- patrol boat Shaiva
- patrol boat Nalash
- patrol boat Pistolet
- patrol boat Pulia
- auxiliary Neptun

PORI

- 1st patrol division
- auxiliary Posadnik
- auxiliary Voevoda
- auxiliary Kondor
- auxiliary Berkut

MÄNTYLUOTO

- icebreaker Sampo

RAUMA

- 3rd detached minesweeper flotilla
- transport Kapella
- transport Poluks
- Finnish customs department
- steamer Vikengen
- steamer Bordvakhten

DEGERBY

- steamer Marlograf

ÖRÖ

- lightship Storklubben

REVAL

- 1st cruiser brigade
- Riurik
- Baian
- Oleg
- Bogatyr'
- 1st destroyer division
- Pobeditel'
- Zabiika
- Orfei
- Grom
- 3rd destroyer division
- Avtroil
- Priamislav
- Gavriil
- Iziaslav
- Konstantin
- 4th destroyer division
- Sibirskii Strelok
- General Kondratenko
- Okhotnik
- Pogranichnik
- 6th destroyer division
- Steregushchii
- Strashnyi
- Zabaikalets
- 2nd submarine division
- Tigr
- L'vitsa
- Pantera
- Rys'
- 3rd submarine division

- Kuguar
- Smeia
- Leopard
- 4th submarine division
- A.G. -11
- A.G. -12
- A.G. -13
- A.G. -14
- A.G. -14
- icebreaker Petr Velikii
- icebreaker Tsar' Mikhail Fedorovich
- icebreaker Ermak

WERDEN
7 auxiliaries

RIGA
- gunboat Khrabryi
3 steamers
4 motor boats

ROGSKÜL
8 steamers

UST-DVINSK
- gunboat Grosiashchii

BALTISCHPORT
5 steamers

NARGEN
2 steamers

TSEREL
2 ships

LOKSA
1 ship

PETROGRAD
- cruiser Avrora
- submarine Forel'
- submarine Ersh
auxiliaries

KRONSTADT
- destroyer Letun
school and training ships
- battleship Imperator Aleksandr II

VIIPURI
- steamer Suomi

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COASTAL BATTERIES OF THE NAVAL FORTRESS OF EMPEROR PETER THE GREAT on the Finnish coast

no. name	commissioned	number and calibre of guns (mm)		
20 Mäkiluoto	20.	VIII	1914	3x205
25 Hästö	16.	VII	1914	4x152
27 Russarö	6.	VIII	1915	4x75A
"-				2x75A
28 "-				6x234
59 Öro		X	1915	4x120
61 "-		XII	1915	4x152
60 "-			1916	4x305
62 Utö		V	1915	4x152
63 "-		XII	1915	4x152
64a "-		VIII	1915	2x75A
64 "-		VIII	1916	3x152
65 Lemland		IV	1916	4x120
66 Stora-Klubben		IV	1916	4x152
68 Skattaudd		IV	1915	4x120
67 "-		IX	1915	4x152
69 Hamnö		VII	1916	2x120
70 Karlsö		V	1916	2x120
71 Åland		V	1916	3x152
72 Åland		V	1916	3x152
73 Åland		V	1916	3x152
74 Åland		V	1916	3x152
20 Mäkiluoto		V	1917	4x203
"-	13.	V	1917	3x57AA
"-	? ?	?		6x14"

Source: Amirkhanov, *Morskaiia krepost' Imperatora Petra Velikago*, prilozhenie 4 & 5, pp. 72-74

DETACHMENTS QUARTERED IN THE GARRISONS IN FINLAND IN THE AUTUMN OF 1917.

VIIPURI

permanent garrison of Viipuri fortress

mine company
sapper company
military telegraph
wireless station
fortress artillery

garrison of Viipuri

1st Viipuri Fortress Infantry Regiment
2nd Viipuri Fortress Infantry Regiment
3rd Viipuri Fortress Infantry Regiment
1st Taman Cossack Regiment
4th Horse Battery
Viipuri Artillery Regiment
4th Kuban Cossack Artillery Battery

Staff of 42nd Army Corps

office of the quartermaster-general
office of the staff officer of the day
office of lines of communication
corps medical office
office of the artillery inspector
office of the staff quartermaster
office of the corps rear commandant
corps baggage train

2nd Mobile Gasoline-Autocar Stores

Staff of Finland Composite Border Division

42nd Motor-Cycle Detachment
staff automobile command
office of former VIth army automobile detachment commander

army committee (Soviet)
commandant's horse command
commandant's company
signals command

soldiers' committee for special purposes
fire brigade

East Finland provisions detachment
magazine

Viipuri fortress cashier

Viipuri railway station commandant
office of Viipuri fortress controller
office of Viipuri town commandant
office of constructor and engineer of the Viipuri fortress

4th Marching Company

Siberian Reserve Sapper Battalion

Office of the 4th Fortress Constructor

fortress automobile command

office of Viipuri fortress quartermaster

Viipuri fortress cattle

Viipuri fortress provisions magazine

Viipuri fortress quartermaster's clothing store

office of Finland wireless telegraph division

42nd Corps Wireless Detachment

2nd Detached Stationary Wireless Station

Vyborg wireless telegraph station

post and telegraph detachment

46th Field Telegraph Detachment

46th Field Post Office

8th Telegraph Labour Column

Office of the Chief of the 1st Lines of Communications Section

one company of the 46th Lines of Communication Battalion

office of the district military chief

Viipuri fortress sanitation office

1st Viipuri Fortress Temporary Hospital

2nd Viipuri Fortress Temporary Hospital

Viipuri local hospital

Viipuri fortress lines of communication
veterinary hospital

medical observation post

Sanitary-Hygienic Detachment no. 57

veterinary-disinfecting detachment of the former VIth Army

KUOKKALA

4th Finland Border Guards Foot Detachment

ANTREA

328th Pskov Druzhina

LAPPEENRANTA

Staff of the Caucasian 5th Division

1st Caucasian Cossack Regiment

5th Caucasian Cossack Foot Rifle Detachment

3rd Line Cossack Regiment

Staff of the 367th Minsk Druzhina

367th Druzhina

134th Machine Gun Detachment

horse sapper detachment

HAMINA

2nd Reserve Regiment

KOUVOLA

Staff of the 32nd Smolensk Druzhina

32nd Druzhina
Marching Company of the 421st Regiment
corps clothing store
magazine

KORIA
local sapper depot

MIKKELI
4th Caucasian Horse Artillery Battalion
Staff
6th Caucasian Horse Battery
9th Caucasian Horse Battery

PIEKSÄMÄKI
wireless station

JYVÄSKYLÄ
magazine

LAHTI
wireless station

RIIHIMÄKI
424th Regiment Staff
2nd Battalion/424th Regiment
3rd Battalion/424th Regiment
Staff of 2nd Battalion/106th Artillery
Brigade
6th Battery/106th Artillery Brigade
Lines of Communication Company no.
27
3rd and 4th platoons of 3rd Company of
46th Lines of Communication Battalion
Staff of 38th Light Artillery Store
38th Light Artillery Stores (part)
air observer command

HELSINKI
Staff of 92nd Militia Brigade
3rd Ekaterinodarsk Cossack Regiment
office of district military chief
office of Finland local brigade
Helsinki convoy brigade
office of chief of military transports
office of railway station commandant
office of town commandant
office of quartermaster

TUUSULA
division baggage train

TAMMISAARI
34th Smolensk Druzhina

TURKU
4th Petrograd Border Guards Horse Detachment

HÄMEENLINNA
1st battalion/424th Regiment
40th Sapper Battalion
Mobile Field Bakery No. 180
fortress cattle
corps provisions transport
4th Magazine
Military-Sanitary Transport no. 121
Staff of the 391st Minsk Druzhina
391st Druzhina
signals detachment of the 106th Division
1st Hospital of the 106th Division
2nd Hospital of the 106th Division
office of district military chief

TOIJALA
lines of communication veterinarian
hospital of the corps
veterinary-disinfecting detachment of
the corps staff

TAMPERE
office of the corps engineer
Staff of the 106th Division
422nd Regiment Staff
422nd Regiment
1st and 2nd platoons of 3rd Company of
46th Lines of Communication Battalion
Lines of Communication Company no.
2
Staff of 12th (fortifications) Constructor
Tampere local wireless station
corps field cashier
corps provisions magazine
office of divisional commandant
anti-gas command of the staff of the
106th Division
Military-Police Telegraph no. 13
Staff of 106th Artillery Brigade
division baggage train

HARJAVALTA
4th Artillery Battalion/106th Artillery
Brigade

PEIPOHJA
421st Regiment
38th Light Artillery Stores (part)

RAUMA
3rd, 4th(2 guns), 13th, 15th Detached

Coastal Batteries
post and telegraph detachment

PORI
2nd, 4th(2 guns), 5th Detached Coastal
Batteries
43rd Don Cossack Regiment
106th Detached Mine Company
3rd Artillery Stores
3rd Petrograd Border Guards Horse De-
tachment
post and telegraph detachment

SEINÄJOKI
423rd regiment

VAASA
Staff of 1st Group of Stationary Batte-
ries
9th Detached Coastal Battery
Staff of 2nd group of Stationary Batte-
ries
2nd Detached Baltic Horse Brigade
Staff
3rd Baltic Horse Regiment Staff and 1st
Squadron
2nd Petrograd Border Guards Horse De-
tachment
3rd Finland Border Guards Foot Detach-
ment
post and telegraph detachment

UUSIKAARLEPPY
7th, 18th Detached Coastal Batteries

ILMAJOKI
5th Artillery Battalion/106th Artillery
Brigade

PIETARSAARI
5th, 16th Detached Coastal Batteries
KOKKOLA
6th, 17th Detached Coastal Batteries
2nd Finland Border Guards Foot De-
tachment

KASKINEN
8th, 10th Detached Coastal Batteries

KRISTINANKAUPUNKI
11th, 14th Detached Coastal Batteries
post and telegraph detachment

OULU
33rd Smolensk Druzhina
1st Petrograd Border Guards Horse De-
tachment
1st Finland Border Guards Foot Detach-
ment

UNDER THE COMMAND OF THE
BALTIC FLEET
(at the beginning of 1917)
REVAL and MÄKILUOTO
land artillery batteries, part of which
had been loaned to the Northern Front

SVEABORG
fortress staff
gendarme command
two regiments of fortress artillery
two sapper companies
two mine battalions
one aviation company
one telegraph company
428th Lodeinopole Infantry Regiment
128th Infantry Division Staff
509th Gzhatsk Regiment
510th Volkhov Regiment
511th Sychev Regiment
512th Desna Regiment
quartermaster's detachments
provisions magazine
sanitation detachment
three military hospitals

Source: RGVA, fond 2262, opis' 1,
delo 151, kvartirnoe raspisanie, 42
armeiskii korpus. – The list was
made for voting for the Constituent
Assembly, but the number of soldiers
was not given in it.

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AVPR = ARKHIV VNESHNEI POLITIKI ROSSII, Moskva.

Fond kantseliariia 1905.
Fond kantseliariia 1906.
Fond ministra.

BA-MA = BUNDESARCHIV-MILITÄRARCHIV, Freiburg i. Br.

RM 5/v war plans and reports of the Reichsmarine.
– 3597 Verträge mit den Baltenländern, Gr.H.Qu. 22.VI 1918.
– 4648 Marine Konvention (Baltenländern).

EMATSH = ETAT-MAJOR DE L'ARMÉE DE TERRE, SERVICE HISTORIQUE, Vincennes.

7 N 1475 – 7 N 1544 Attachés Militaires Russie.

GARF = GOSUDARSTVENNYI ARKHIV ROSSIISKOI FEDERATSII, previously TsGAOR = TSENTRAL'NYI GOSUDARSTVENNYI ARKHIV OKTIABRSKOI REVOLIUTSII, Moskva.

Fond 1778, opis 1, Kantseliariia ministra

predsedatelia vremennogo pravitelstva.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF FINLAND, Helsinki

KKK = Kenraalikuvernöörin kanslia, Governor-General's Chancery.
– *dela* or files numbered annually.
– special collections numbered separately.

Ven sot asiak = Venäläiset sotilasasiakirjat, Russian military documents, numbered without order.

VSV = Ministerivaltiosihteerin virasto, aktit, files of the office of the Minister State Secretary.

V. Procopén kokoelma: Akter, handlingar och protokoll från Komitén under K.P. Pobedonostseffs' ordförande; Om behandlingen af Värnepligtsfrågorna, på urtima landtagen 1899, the Procopé archives, on questions of national military service.

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PRO = PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, Kew.

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 Fond 417, Glavnyi Morskoi Shtab 1884-1918.
 Fond 418, Morskoi General'nyi Shtab 1906-1918.
 Fond 791, "Strazh", kreiser flotilii ot del'nogo korpusa pogranichnoi strazhi Baltiiskogo flota 1873-1916.
 Fond 972, Sveaborgskii port 1808-1918.
 Fond 1345, upravlenie nachal'nika artilerii Sveaborgskoi kreposti ?-1918.
 Fond 1347, upravlenie intendanta Sveaborgskoi kreposti 188?-1918.
 Fond 1350, Vyborskaka krepost 1734-1919.

¹ On the catalogue an instruction is written: "see cases 3648 & 3649 for complete reports 1919-1920"; three officials of the PRO searched in vain for these cases (in August 1995), and the explanation was that 'some learned persons' took these documents out of the normal files for writing the official History of the First World War, and they were never returned.

RGVIA = ROSSIISKII
 GOSUDARSTVENNYI
 VOENNO-ISTORICHESKII
 ARKHIV, previously TsGVIA =
 TSENTRALNYI
 GOSUDARSTVENNYI
 VOENNO-ISTORICHESKII
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 Fond 400, opis' 6, Glavnyi shtab, Mobilizatsionnyi otdel'.
 Fond 472, voina so Shvetsiei 1808-1809 gg.
 Fond 928, Osobaia Finliandskaia voennotsenzurnaia komissiia.
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 Fond 2977, 428 lodeinopoleinyi polk.
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